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21

AUTOBIOGRAPHY &c. OF MRS. PIOZZI

Welcome, Associate Forms, where'er we turn ;
Fill, Streatham's Hebe, the Johnsonian urn.

ST. STEPHEN'S.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY
LETTERS AND LITERARY REMAINS
OF
MRS. PIOZZI (THRALE)

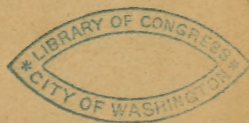
EDITED WITH NOTES

AND AN INTRODUCTORY ACCOUNT OF HER LIFE AND WRITINGS

BY A. HAYWARD, ESQ. Q.C.



Mrs. Piozzi. Æt. 76.



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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION: LIFE AND WRITINGS OF MRS. PIOZZI	1
AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIRS	161
Her Story of her Life	163
Introduction to Piozzi	183
Domestic Trials	185
Second Marriage	188
Residence in Italy	192
Thrale's Will. — Sale of the Brewery	201
The charming S. S.	203
Thrale's Illness	205
Death of Thrale	207
Dr. Collier	209
NOTES ON "LETTERS TO AND FROM DR. JOHNSON," including new Anecdotes of Johnson and his Cotemporaries	211
NOTES ON WRAXALL'S "HISTORICAL MEMOIRS OF MY OWN TIME," including the true Story of the Lyttelton Ghost, and Anec- dotes of various Literary and Political Celebrities	224
MISCELLANIES, OR ORIGINAL COMPOSITIONS IN PROSE AND VERSE	245
The Three Warnings	247
Duty and Pleasure	250
The Streatham Portraits	251

Asheri	258
Her Character of Thrale	263
Translation of Laura Bassi's Verses	266
A Frightful Story	268
Della Crusca Verses	270
Ode to Society	273
Epigrams and Translations	275
Verses on Buffon	280
Dedication and Preface of the "Florence Miscellany"	281
Occasional Verses	283
 LETTERS	 287
 MISCELLANEOUS EXTRACTS FROM "THRALIANA"	 477
 EXTRACTS FROM "BRITISH SYNONYMY"	 494
 INDEX	 521



INTRODUCTION:

LIFE AND WRITINGS OF MRS. PIOZZI.



INTRODUCTION:

LIFE AND WRITINGS OF MRS. PIOZZI.

DR. JOHNSON has been hailed by acclamation the literary colossus of an epoch when the galaxy of British authorship sparkled with the names of Hume, Robertson, Gibbon, Warburton, the Wartons, Fielding, Richardson, Smollett, Gray, Goldsmith, and Burke. Any one of these may have surpassed the great lexicographer in some one branch of learning or domain of genius; but as a man of letters, in the highest sense of the term, he towered pre-eminent, and his superiority to each of them (except Burke) in general acquirements, intellectual power, and force of expression, was hardly contested by his contemporaries. To be associated with his name has become a title of distinction in itself; and some members of his circle enjoy, and have fairly earned, a peculiar advantage in this respect. In their capacity of satellites revolving round the sun of their idolatry, they attracted and reflected his light and heat. As humble companions of their *Magnolia grandiflora*, they did more than live with it; * they gathered and preserved the choicest of its flowers. Thanks to them, his reputation is kept alive more by what has been saved of his conversation than by his books; and his colloquial exploits necessarily revive the memory of the friends (or victims) who elicited and recorded them.

If the two most conspicuous amongst these have hitherto gained notoriety rather than what is commonly understood by fame, a.

* "Je ne suis pas la rose, mais j'ai vécu avec elle." — *Constant*.

discriminating posterity is already beginning to make reparation for the wrong. Boswell's "Letters to Temple," edited by Mr. Francis, with "Boswelliana," printed for the Philobiblion Society by Mr. Milnes, led, in 1857, to a revival of the harsh sentence passed on one whom the most formidable of his censors, Lord Macaulay, has declared to be not less decidedly the first of biographers, than Homer is the first of heroic poets, Shakespeare the first of dramatists, or Demosthenes the first of orators. The result was eminently favorable to Boswell, although the vulnerable points of his character were still more glaringly displayed. The appeal about to be hazarded on behalf of Mrs. Piozzi will involve little or no risk of this kind. Her ill-wishers made the most of the event which so injuriously affected her reputation at the time of its occurrence; and the marked tendency of every additional disclosure of the circumstances has been to elevate her. No candid person will read her Autobiography, or her Letters, without arriving at the conclusion that her long life was morally, if not conventionally, irreproachable; and that her talents were sufficient to confer on her writings a value and attraction of their own, apart from what they possess as illustrations of a period or a school. When the papers out of which this volume is principally composed were laid before Lord Macaulay, he gave it as his opinion that they afforded materials for a "most interesting and durably popular volume."

They comprise:—

1. Autobiographical Memoirs.
2. Letters, mostly addressed to the late Sir James Fellowes.
3. Fugitive pieces of her composition, most of which have never appeared in print.
4. Manuscript notes by her on Wraxall's Memoirs, and on her own published works, namely: "Anecdotes of the late Samuel Johnson, LL. D., during the last twenty years of his life," one volume, 1786; "Letters to and from the late Samuel Johnson, LL. D., &c.," in two volumes, 1788; "Observations and Reflections made in the course of a Journey through France, Italy, and Germany," in two volumes, 1789; "Retrospection; or, Review of the most striking and important Events, Characters, Situations, and their Consequences which the last Eighteen Hundred

Years have presented to the View of Mankind," in two volumes, quarto, 1801.

The "Autobiographical Memoirs," and the annotated books, were given by her to the late Sir James Fellowes, of Adbury House, Hants, M. D., F. R. S., to whom the letters were addressed. He and the late Sir John Piozzi Salusbury were her executors, and the present publication takes place in pursuance of an agreement with their personal representatives, the Rev. G. A. Salusbury, Rector of Westbury, Salop, and Captain J. Butler Fellowes.

Valuable additions to the original stock of materials have reached me since the announcement of the work. The Rev. Dr. Wellesley, the Principal of New Inn Hall, has kindly placed at my disposal his copy of Boswell's "Life of Johnson," (edition of 1816), plentifully sprinkled with marginal notes by Mrs. Piozzi. The Rev. Samuel Lysons, of Hempsted Court, Gloucester, has liberally allowed me the free use of his valuable collection of books and manuscripts, including numerous letters from Mrs. Piozzi to his father and uncle, the Rev. Daniel Lysons and Mr. Samuel Lysons, the friend and correspondent of Johnson; and I shall have many more obligations to acknowledge as I proceed.

From 1776 to 1809 Mrs. Piozzi kept a copious diary and note-book, called "Thraliana." Johnson thus alludes to it in a letter of September 6th, 1777: "As you have little to do, I suppose you are pretty diligent at the 'Thraliana;' and a very curious collection posterity will find it. Do not remit the practice of writing down occurrences as they arise, of whatever kind, and be very punctual in annexing the dates. Chronology, you know, is the eye of history. Do not omit painful casualties or unpleasing passages; they make the variegation of existence; and there are many passages of which I will not promise, with *Æneas, et hæc olim meminisse juvabit.*" "Thraliana," which at one time she thought of burning, is now in the possession of Mr. Salusbury, who deems it of too private and delicate a character to be submitted to strangers, but has kindly supplied me with some curious passages and much valuable information extracted from it.

Unless Mrs. Piozzi's character and social position are freshly remembered, her reminiscences and literary remains will lose much of their interest and utility. It has, therefore, been thought advisable to recapitulate, by way of introduction, what has been ascertained from other sources concerning her: especially during her intimacy with Johnson, which lasted nearly twenty years, and exercised a marked influence on his tone of mind.

"This year (1765)," says Boswell, "was distinguished by his (Johnson) being introduced into the family of Mr. Thrale, one of the most eminent brewers in England, and member of Parliament for the borough of Southwark. . . . Johnson used to give this account of the rise of Mr. Thrale's father: 'He worked at six shillings a week for twenty years in the great brewery, which afterwards was his own. The proprietor of it had an only daughter, who was married to a nobleman. It was not fit that a peer should continue the business. On the old man's death, therefore, the brewery was to be sold. To find a purchaser for so large a property was a difficult matter; and, after some time, it was suggested, that it would be advisable to treat with Thrale, a sensible, active, honest man, who had been employed in the house, and to transfer the whole to him for thirty thousand pounds, security being taken upon the property. This was accordingly settled. In eleven years Thrale paid the purchase-money. He acquired a large fortune, and lived to be a member of Parliament for Southwark. But what was most remarkable was the liberality with which he used his riches. He gave his son and daughters the best education. The esteem which his good conduct procured him from the nobleman who had married his master's daughter, made him be treated with much attention; and his son, both at school and at the University of Oxford, associated with young men of the first rank. His allowance from his father, after he left college, was splendid; not less than a thousand a year. This, in a man who had risen as old Thrale did, was a very extraordinary instance of generosity. He used to say, 'If this young dog does not find so much after I am gone as he expects, let him remember that he has had a great deal in my own time.'"

What is here stated regarding Thrale's origin, on the alleged authority of Johnson, is incorrect. The elder Thrale was the nephew of Halsey, the proprietor of the brewery, whose daughter was married to a nobleman (Lord Cobham), and he naturally nourished hopes of being his uncle's successor. In the Abbey Church of St. Albans there is a monument to some members of the Thrale family who died between 1676 and 1704, adorned with a shield of arms and a crest on a ducal coronet. Mrs. Thrale's marginal note on Boswell's account of her husband's family is curious and characteristic: —

“Edmund Halsey was son to a miller at St. Albans, with whom he quarrelled, like Ralph in the ‘Maid of the Mill,’ and ran away to London with a very few shillings in his pocket. He was eminently handsome, and old Child, of the Anchor Brew-house, Southwark, took him in as what we call a broomstick clerk, to sweep the yard, &c. Edmund Halsey behaved so well he was soon preferred to be a house-clerk, and then, having free access to his master's table, married his only daughter, and succeeded to the business upon Child's demise. Being now rich and prosperous, he turned his eyes homewards, where he learned that sister Sukey had married a hard-working man at Offley in Hertfordshire, and had many children. He sent for one of them to London (my Mr. Thrale's father); said he would make a man of him, and did so, but made him work very hard, and treated him very roughly, Halsey being more proud than tender, and his only child, a daughter, married to Lord Cobham.

“Old Thrale, however, as these fine writers call him, — then a young fellow, and, like his uncle, eminent for personal beauty, — made himself so useful to Mr. Halsey that the weight of the business fell entirely on him; and while Edmund was canvassing the borough and visiting the viscountess, Ralph Thrale was getting money both for himself and his principal, who, envious of his success with a wench they both liked, but who preferred the young man to the old one, died, leaving him never a guinea, and he bought the brewhouse of Lord and Lady Cobham, making an excellent bargain, with the money he had saved.”

When, in the next page but one, Boswell describes Thrale as presenting the character of a plain, independent English squire,

she writes: "No, no! Mr. Thrale's manners presented the character of a gay man of the town: like Millamant, in Congreve's comedy, he abhorred the country and everything in it."

In "Thraliana," after a corresponding statement, she adds: "He (the elder Thrale) educated his son and three daughters quite in a high style. His son he wisely connected with the Cobhams and their relations, Grenvilles, Lyttletons, and Pitts, to whom he lent money, and they lent assistance of every other kind, so that my Mr. Thrale was bred up at Stowe, and Stoke, and Oxford, and every genteel place; had been abroad with Lord Westcote, whose expenses old Thrale cheerfully paid, I suppose, who was thus a kind of tutor to the young man, who had not failed to profit by these advantages, and who was, when he came down to Offley to see his father's birthplace, a very handsome and well-accomplished gentleman."

After expatiating on the advantages of birth, and the presumption of new men in attempting to found a new system of gentility, Boswell proceeds: "Mr. Thrale had married Miss Hester Lynch Salusbury, of good Welsh extraction, a lady of lively talents, improved by education. That Johnson's introduction into Mr. Thrale's family, which contributed so much to the happiness of his life, was owing to her desire for his conversation, is a very probable and the general supposition; but it is not the truth. Mr. Murphy, who was intimate with Mr. Thrale, having spoken very highly of Dr. Johnson, he was requested to make them acquainted. This being mentioned to Johnson, he accepted of an invitation to dinner at Thrale's, and was so much pleased with his reception, both by Mr. and Mrs. Thrale, and they so much pleased with him, that his invitations to their house were more and more frequent, till at last he became one of the family, and an apartment was appropriated to him, both in their house at Southwark and in their villa at Streatham."

Boswell was jealous of Mrs. Thrale (as it is most convenient to call her till her second marriage) as a rival biographer, and lost no opportunity of depreciating her. He might at least, however, have stated that instead of sanctioning the "general supposition" as to the introduction, she herself supplied the account of it which he adopts. In her "Anecdotes" she says:—

“The first time I ever saw this extraordinary man was in the year 1764, when Mr. Murphy, who had long been the friend and confidential intimate of Mr. Thrale, persuaded him to wish for Johnson’s conversation, extolling it in terms which that of no other person could have deserved, till we were only in doubt how to obtain his company, and find an excuse for the invitation. The celebrity of Mr. Woodhouse, a shoemaker, whose verses were at that time the subject of common discourse, soon afforded a pretence, and Mr. Murphy brought Johnson to meet him, giving me general caution not to be surprised at his figure, dress, or behavior. Mr. Johnson liked his new acquaintance so much, however, that from that time he dined with us every Thursday through the winter, and in the autumn of the next year he followed us to Brighthelmstone, whence we were gone before his arrival; so he was disappointed and enraged, and wrote us a letter expressive of anger, which we were very desirous to pacify, and to obtain his company again if possible. Mr. Murphy brought him back to us again very kindly, and from that time his visits grew more frequent, till in the year 1766 his health, which he had always complained of, grew so exceedingly bad, that he could not stir out of his room in the court he inhabited for many *weeks* together, I think *months*.”

It is strange that they should differ about the date of the introduction by a year. She goes on to say that when she and her husband called on Johnson one morning in this court (Johnson’s Court, Fleet Street), he gave way to such an uncontrolled burst of despair regarding the world to come, that Mr. Thrale tried to stop his mouth by placing one hand before it, and before leaving him desired her to prevail on him to quit his close habitation for a period and come with them to Streatham. He complied, and took up his abode with them from before Midsummer till after Michaelmas in that year. During the next sixteen years a room in their house was set apart for him.

The principal difficulty at first was to induce him to live peaceably with her mother, who took a strong dislike to him, and constantly led the conversation to topics which he detested, such as foreign news and politics. He revenged himself by writing to the newspapers accounts of events which never happened, for the

sole purpose of mystifying her ; and probably more than one of his mischievous fictions have passed current for history. They made up their differences before her death, and a Latin epitaph of the most eulogistic order from his pen is inscribed upon her tomb.

It had been well for Mrs. Thrale and her guests if there had existed no more serious objection to Johnson as an inmate. At the commencement of the acquaintance, he was fifty-six ; an age when habits are ordinarily fixed ; and many of his were of a kind which it required no common temper and tact to tolerate or control. They had been formed at a period when he was frequently subjected to the worst extremities of humiliating poverty and want. He describes Savage, without money to pay for a night's lodging in a cellar, walking about the streets till he was weary, and sleeping in the summer upon a bulk or in the winter amongst the ashes of a glass-house. He was Savage's associate on more than one occasion of the sort. Whilst at college, he threw away the shoes which were left at his door to replace the worn-out pair in which he appeared daily. His clothes were in so tattered a state whilst he was writing for the " Gentleman's Magazine " that, instead of taking his seat at Cave's table, he sat behind a screen and had his victuals sent to him.

Talking of the symptoms of Christopher Smart's madness, he said, " Another charge was that he did not love clean linen ; and I have no passion for it." In general his wigs were very shabby, and their foreparts were burned away by the near approach of the candle, which his short-sightedness rendered necessary in reading. At Streatham, Mr. Thrale's valet had always a better wig ready, with which he met Johnson at the parlor door when dinner was announced, and as he went up stairs to bed, the same man followed him with another.

One of his applications to Cave for a trifling advance of money is signed *Impransus* ; and he told Boswell that he could fast two days without inconvenience, and had never been hungry but once. What he meant by hungry is not easy to explain, for his everyday manner of eating was that of a half-famished man. When at table, he was totally absorbed in the business of the moment ; his looks were riveted to his plate, till he had satisfied his appetite ; which was indulged with such intenseness, that the veins of his

forehead swelled, and generally a strong perspiration was visible. Until he left off drinking fermented liquors altogether, he acted on the maxim "Claret for boys, port for men, brandy for heroes." He preferred the strongest, because, he said, it did its work (i. e. intoxicate) the soonest. He used to pour capillaire into his port wine, and melted butter into his chocolate. His favorite dishes are accurately enumerated by Peter Pindar: —

MADAME PIOZZI (*loquitur*).

"Dear Doctor Johnson loved a leg of pork,
And hearty on it would his grinders work:
He liked to eat it so much overdone,
That *one* might shake the flesh from off the bone.
A veal pye too, with sugar crammed and plums,
Was wondrous grateful to the Doctor's gums.
Though used from morn to night on fruit to stuff,
He vowed his belly never had enough."

Mr. Thackeray relates, in his "Irish Sketches," that on his asking for currant-jelly for his venison at a public dinner, the waiter replied, "It's all gone, your honor; but there's some capital lobster-sauce left." This would have suited Johnson equally well, or better; he was so fond of lobster-sauce, that he would call for the sauce-boat and pour the whole of its remaining contents over his plum-pudding. A clergyman who once travelled with him relates: "The coach halted as usual for dinner, which seemed to be a deeply interesting business to Johnson, who vehemently attacked a dish of stewed carp, using his fingers only in feeding himself."

With all this he affected great nicety of palate, and did not like being asked to a plain dinner. "It was a good dinner enough," he would remark, "but it was not a dinner to ask a man to." He was so displeased with the performances of a nobleman's French cook, that he exclaimed, with vehemence, "I'd throw such a rascal into the river;" and, in reference to one of his Edinburgh hosts, he said, "As for Maclaurin's imitation of a made dish, it was a wretched attempt."

His voice was loud, and his gesticulations, voluntary or involuntary, singularly uncouth. He had superstitious fancies about crossing thresholds or squares in the carpet with the right or left

leg foremost, and when he did not appear at dinner, might be found vainly endeavoring to pass a particular spot in the ante-room. He loved late hours, or more properly (says Mrs. Thrale) hated early ones. Nothing was more terrifying to him than the idea of going to bed, which he never would call going to rest, or suffer another to call it so. "I lie down that my acquaintance may sleep; but I lie down to endure oppressive misery, and soon rise again to pass the night in anxiety and pain." When people could be induced to sit up with him, they were often amply compensated by his rich flow of mind; but the resulting sacrifice of health and comfort in an establishment where this sitting up became habitual, was inevitably great.* Instead of being grateful, he always maintained that no one forbore his own gratification for the purpose of pleasing another, and "if one did sit up, it was probably to amuse one's self." Boswell excuses his wife for not coinciding in his enthusiasm, by admitting that his illustrious friend's irregular hours and uncouth habits, such as turning the candles with their ends downwards when they did not burn bright enough, and letting the wax drop upon the carpet, could not but be displeasing to a lady. He was generally last at breakfast, but one morning happened to be first, and waited some time alone; when afterwards twitted by Mrs. Thrale with irregularity, he replied, "Madam, I do not like to come down to vacuity."

If his early familiarity with all the miseries of destitution, aggravated by disease, had increased his natural roughness and irritability, on the other hand it had helped largely to bring out his sterling virtues, — his discriminating charity, his genuine benevolence, his well-timed generosity, his large-hearted sympathy with real suffering or sorrow. He said it was enough to make a plain man sick to hear pity lavished on a family reduced by losses to exchange a palace for a comfortable cottage; and when condolence was demanded for a lady of rank in mourning for a baby, he contrasted her with a washerwoman with half

* Dr. Burney states that in 1765 "he very frequently met Johnson at Streat-ham, where they had many long conversations, after sitting up as long as the fire and candles lasted, and much longer than the patience of the servants subsisted."

a dozen children dependent on her daily labor for their daily bread.*

Lord Macaulay thus portrays the objects of Johnson's hospitality as soon as he had got a house to cover them. "It was the home of the most extraordinary assemblage of inmates that ever was brought together. At the head of the establishment he had placed an old lady named Williams, whose chief recommendations were her blindness and her poverty. But in spite of her murmurs and reproaches, he gave an asylum to another lady who was as poor as herself, Mrs. Desmoulins, whose family he had known many years before in Staffordshire. Room was found for the daughter of Mrs. Desmoulins, and for another destitute damsel, who was generally addressed as Mrs. Carmichael, but whom her generous host called Polly. An old quack doctor called Levet, who bled and dosed coal-heavers and hackney coachmen, and received for fees crusts of bread, bits of bacon, glasses of gin, and sometimes a little copper, completed this menagerie." †

It is strange that Lord Macaulay should have given this depreciating description of Levet, having, as he must have had, Johnson's lines "On the Death of Mr. Robert Levet, a Practiser in Physic," full in his recollection: —

"Well tryed through many a varying year,
See Levet to the grave descend,
Officious, innocent, sincere,
Of every friendless name the friend.

"Yet still he fills affection's eye,
Obscurely wise and coarsely kind;
Nor, lettered Arrogance, deny
Thy praise to merit unrefined."

This picture of Johnson's interior is true in the main, when it is added that the inmates of his house were quarrelling from morning to night with one another, with his negro-servant, or with himself. In one of his letters to Mrs. Thrale, he says, "Williams hates everybody: Levet hates Desmoulins, and does

* "It's weel wi' you gentles that can sit in the house wi' handkerchers at your een when ye lose a friend; but the like o' us maun to our wark again, if our hearts were beating as hard as any hammer." — *The Antiquary*.

† Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I. p. 293.

not love Williams: Desmoulins hates them both: Poll (Miss Carmichael) loves none of them." In a conversation at Streat-ham, reported by Madame D'Arblay, the *menagerie* was thus humorously described:—

"*Mrs. Thrale.*—Mr. Levet, I suppose, Sir, has the office of keeping the hospital in health? for he is an apothecary.

"*Dr. J.*—Levet, Madam, is a brutal fellow, but I have a good regard for him; for his brutality is in his manners, not his mind.

"*Mr. Thrale.*—But how do you get your dinners drest?

"*Dr. J.*—Why De Mullin has the chief management of the kitchen; but our roasting is not magnificent, for we have no jack.

"*Mr. T.*—No jack? Why how do they manage without?

"*Dr. J.*—Small joints, I believe, they manage with a string, and larger are done at the tavern. I have some thoughts (with a profound gravity) of buying a jack, because I think a jack is some credit to a house.

"*Mr. T.*—Well, but you'll have a spit, too?

"*Dr. J.*—No, Sir, no; that would be superfluous; for we shall never use it; and if a jack is seen, a spit will be presumed!

"*Mrs. T.*—But pray, Sir, who is the Poll you talk of? She that you used to abet in her quarrels with Mrs. Williams, and call out, 'At her again, Poll! Never flinch, Poll!'

"*Dr. J.*—Why I took to Poll very well at first, but she won't do upon a nearer examination.

"*Mrs. T.*—How came she among you, Sir?

"*Dr. J.*—Why I don't rightly remember, but we could spare her very well from us. Poll is a stupid slut; I had some hopes of her at first; but when I talked to her tightly and closely, I could make nothing of her; she was wiggle waggle, and I could never persuade her to be categorical."

The effect of an unbroken residence with such inmates, on a man of irritable temper subject to morbid melancholy, may be guessed; and the merit of the Thrales in rescuing him from it, and in soothing down his asperities, can hardly be over-estimated. Lord Macaulay says, they were flattered by finding that a man so widely celebrated preferred their house to every other in London (where, by the way, very few of the same class were open

to him), and suggests that even the peculiarities which seemed to unfit him for civilized society, including his gesticulations, his rollings, his puffings, his mutterings, and the ravenous eagerness with which he devoured his food, increased the interest which his new associates took in him. His hostess does not appear to have viewed them in that light, and she was able to command the best company of the intellectual order without the aid of a "lion," or a bear. If his conversation attracted many, it drove away some, and silenced more. He accounted for the little attention paid him by the great, by saying that "great lords and great ladies do not like to have their mouths stopped," as if this was peculiar to them as a class. "My leddie," remarks Cuddie, in "Old Mortality," "canna weel bide to be contradicted, as I ken naebody likes, if they could help themselves."

Johnson was in the zenith of his fame when literature, politics, and fashion began to blend together again by hardly perceptible shades, like the colors in shot-silk, as they had partially done in the Augustan age of Queen Anne. One marked sign was the formation of the Literary Club (The Club, as it still claims to be called), which brought together such men as Fox, Burke, Gibbon, Johnson, Goldsmith, Garrick, Reynolds, and Beauclerc, besides blackballing a bishop (the Bishop of Chester) and a lord-chancellor (Camden). Yet it is curious to observe within how narrow a circle of good houses the Doctor's engagements were restricted. Reynolds, Paoli, Beauclerc, Allan Ramsay, Hoole, Dilly, Strahan, Lord Lucan, Langton, Garrick, and the Club formed his main reliance as regards dinners; and we find Boswell recording with manifest symptoms of exultation in 1781: "I dined with him at a bishop's, where were Sir Joshua Reynolds, Mr. Berenger, and some more company. He had dined the day before at another bishop's." His reverence for the episcopal bench well merited some return on their part. Mr. Seward saw him presented to the Archbishop of York, and described his bow to an Archbishop as such a studied elaboration of homage, such an extension of limb, such a flexion of body, as have seldom or ever been equalled. The lay nobility were not equally grateful, although his deference for the peerage was extreme. Except in Scotland or on his travels, he is seldom found dining with a nobleman.

Soon after his domestication at Streatham, the Blue-Stocking Clubs came into fashion, so called from a casual allusion to the blue stockings of an *habitué*, Mr. Stillingfleet. Their founders were Mrs. Vesey and Mrs. Montagu; but according to Madame D'Arblay, "more bland and more gleeful than that of either of them, was the personal celebrity of Mrs. Thrale. Mrs. Vesey, indeed, gentle and diffident, dreamed not of any competition, but Mrs. Montagu and Mrs. Thrale had long been set up as rival candidates for colloquial eminence, and each of them thought the other alone worthy to be her peer. Openly therefore when they met, they combated for precedence of admiration, with placid though high-strained intellectual exertion on the one side, and an exuberant pleasantry or classical allusion or quotation on the other; without the smallest malice in either."

Wraxall, who makes the same comparison, remarks: "Mrs. Thrale always appeared to me to possess at least as much information, a mind as cultivated, and more brilliancy of intellect than Mrs. Montagu, but she did not descend among men from such an eminence, and she talked much more, as well as more unguardedly, on every subject. She was the provider and conductress of Johnson, who lived almost constantly under her roof, or more properly under that of Mr. Thrale, both in Town and at Streatham. He did not, however, spare her more than other women in his attacks if she courted and provoked his animadversions."

Although he seldom appeared to greater advantage than when under the combined spell of feminine influence and rank, his demeanor varied with his mood. On Miss Monkton's (afterwards Lady Cork) insisting, one evening, that Sterne's writings were very pathetic, Johnson bluntly denied it. "I am sure," she rejoined, "they have affected me." "Why," said Johnson, smiling and rolling himself about, "that is because, dearest, you're a dunce." When she some time afterwards mentioned this to him, he said, with equal truth and politeness, "Madam, if I had thought so, I certainly should not have said it."

He did not come off so well on another occasion, when the presence of women whom he respected might be expected to operate as a check. Talking, at Mrs. Garrick's, of a very respectable author, he told us, says Boswell, "a curious circumstance in

his life, which was that he had married a printer's devil. *Reynolds*. 'A printer's devil, Sir! why, I thought a printer's devil was a creature with a black face and in rags.' *Johnson*. 'Yes, Sir. But I suppose he had her face washed, and put clean clothes on her.' Then, looking very serious, and very earnest. 'And she did not disgrace him; — the woman had a bottom of good sense.' The word *bottom* thus introduced was so ludicrous when contrasted with his gravity, that most of us could not forbear tittering and laughing; though I recollect that the Bishop of Killaloe kept his countenance with perfect steadiness, while Miss Hannah More slyly hid her face behind a lady's back who sat on the same settee with her. His pride could not bear that any expression of his should excite ridicule, when he did not intend it: he therefore resolved to assume and exercise despotic power, glanced sternly around, and called out in a strong tone, 'Where's the merriment?' Then collecting himself, and looking awful, to make us feel how he could impose restraint, and as it were searching his mind for a still more ludicrous word, he slowly pronounced, 'I say the *woman* was *fundamentally* sensible;' as if he had said, Hear this now, and laugh if you dare. We all sat composed as at a funeral."

This resembles the influence exercised by the "great commoner" over the House of Commons. An instance being mentioned of his throwing an adversary into irretrievable confusion by an arrogant expression of contempt, the late Mr. Charles Butler asked the relator, an eyewitness, whether the House did not laugh at the ridiculous figure of the poor member. "No, Sir," was the reply, "we were too much awed to laugh."

It was a redeeming feature in Johnson's character that he was extremely fond of female society; so fond, indeed, that on coming to London he was obliged to be on his guard against the temptations to which it exposed him. He left off attending the Green Room, telling Garrick, "I'll come no more behind your scenes, Davy; for the silk stockings and white bosoms of your actresses excite my amorous propensities."

The proneness of his imagination to wander in this forbidden field is unwittingly betrayed by his remarking at Sky, in support of the doctrine that animal substances are less cleanly than veg-

etable: "I have *often* thought that, if I kept a seraglio, the ladies should all wear linen gowns, or cotton, I mean stuffs made of vegetable substances. I would have no silks: you cannot tell when it is clean: it will be very nasty before it is perceived to be so; linen detects its own dirtiness." His virtue thawed instead of becoming more rigid in the North. "This evening," records Boswell of their visit to an Hebridean chief, "one of our married ladies, a lively pretty little woman, good-humoredly sat down upon Dr. Johnson's knee, and being encouraged by some of the company, put her hands round his neck and kissed him. 'Do it again,' said he, 'and let us see who will tire first.' He kept her on his knee some time, whilst he and she drank tea."

The Rev. Dr. Maxwell relates in his "Collectanea," that "Two young women from Staffordshire visited him when I was present, to consult him on the subject of Methodism, to which they were inclined. 'Come,' said he, 'you pretty fools, dine with Maxwell and me at the Mitre, and we will talk over that subject;' which they did, and after dinner he took one of them upon his knee, and fondled her for half an hour together."

Women almost always like men who like them. Johnson, despite of his unwieldy figure, scarred features, and uncouth gestures, was a favorite with the fair; and talked of affairs of the heart as things of which he was entitled to speak from personal experience as confidently as of any other moral or social topics. He told Mrs. Thrale, without the smallest consciousness of presumption, or what Mr. Square would term the unfitness of things, of his and Lord Lyttleton's having contended for Miss Boothby's preference with an emulation that occasioned hearty disgust and ended in lasting animosity. "You may see," he added, when the *Lives of the Poets* were printed, "that dear Boothby is at my heart still. She would delight in that fellow Lyttleton's company though, all that I could do, and I cannot forgive even his memory the preference given by a mind like hers."*

* In point of personal advantages the man of rank and fashion and the scholar were nearly on a par.

"But who is this astride the pony,
So long, so lean, so lank, so bony?
Dat be de great orator, Littletony."

Mr. Croker surmises that "Molly Aston," not dear Boothby, must have been the object of this rivalry; and the surmise is strengthened by Johnson's calling Molly the loveliest creature he ever saw; adding (to Mrs. Thrale), "My wife was a little jealous, and happening one day when walking in the country to meet a fortune-hunting gypsy, Mrs. Johnson made the wench look at my hand, but soon repented of her curiosity, 'for,' says the gypsy, 'your heart is divided between a Betty and a Molly: Betty loves you best, but you take most delight in Molly's company.' When I turned about to laugh, I saw my wife was crying. Pretty charmer, she had no reason.'" This pretty charmer was in her forty-eighth year when he married her, he being then twenty-seven. He told Beauclerc that it was a love match on both sides; and Garrick used to draw ludicrous pictures of their mutual fondness, which he heightened by representing her as short, fat, tawdrily dressed, and highly rouged.

One of Rochefoucauld's maxims is: "Young women who do not wish to appear *coquettes*, and men of advanced years who do not wish to appear ridiculous, should never speak of love as of a thing in which they could take part." Mrs. Thrale relates an amusing instance of Johnson's adroitness in escaping from the dilemma: "As we had been saying one day that no subject failed of receiving dignity from the manner in which Mr. Johnson treated it, a lady at my house said, she would make him talk about love; and took her measures accordingly, deriding the novels of the day because they treated about love. 'It is not,' replied our philosopher, 'because they treat, as you call it, about love, but because they treat of nothing, that they are despicable: we must not ridicule a passion which he who never felt never was happy, and he who laughs at never deserves to feel, — a passion which has caused the change of empires, and the loss of worlds, — a passion which has inspired heroism and subdued avarice.' He thought he had already said too much. 'A passion, in short,' added he, with an altered tone, 'that consumes me away for my pretty Fanny here, and she is very cruel,' speaking of another lady (Miss Burney) in the room."

These peculiarities throw light on more questions than one relating to Johnson's prolonged intimacy with Mrs. Thrale. His

gallantry, and the flattering air of deferential tenderness which he knew how to throw into his commerce with his female favorites, may have had little less to do with his domestication at Streatham than his celebrity, his learning, or his wit. The most submissive wife will manage to dislodge an inmate who is displeasing to her. "Ay, a marriage, man," said Bucklaw to his led captain, "but wherefore droops thy mighty spirit? The board will have a corner, and the corner will have a trencher, and the trencher will have a glass beside it; and the board end shall be filled, and the trencher and the glass shall be replenished for thee, if all the petticoats in Lothian had sworn the contrary." "So says many an honest fellow," said Craigenfelt, "and some of my special friends; but curse me, if I know the reason, the women could never bear me, and always contrived to trundle me out before the honeymoon was over."

It was all very well for Johnson to tell Boswell, "I know no man who is more master of his wife and family than Thrale. If he holds up a finger he is obeyed." The sage took very good care not to act upon the theory, and instead of treating the wife as a cipher, lost no opportunity of paying court to her, though in a manner quite compatible with his own lofty spirit of independence and self-respect. Thus, attention having been called to some Italian verses by Baretti, he converted them into an elegant compliment to her by an improvised paraphrase:—

"Viva! viva la padrona!
Tutta bella, e tutta buona,
La padrona e un angiolella
Tutta buona e tutta bella;
Tutta bella e tutta buona;
Viva! viva la padrona!"

"Long may live my lovely Hetty!
Always young and always pretty,
Always pretty, always young,
Live my lovely Hetty long!
Always young and always pretty;
Long may live my lovely Hetty!"

Her marginal note in the copy of the "Anecdotes" presented by her to Sir James Fellowes in 1816 is: "I heard these verses sung at Mr. Thomas's by three voices, not three weeks ago."

It was in the eighth year of their acquaintance that Johnson solaced his fatigue in the Hebrides by writing a Latin ode to her. "About fourteen years since," wrote Sir Walter Scott, in 1829, "I landed in Sky with a party of friends, and had the curiosity to ask what was the first idea on every one's mind at landing. All answered separately that it was this ode." Thinking Miss Cornelia Knight's version too diffuse, I asked Mr. Milnes for a translation or paraphrase, and he kindly complied by producing these spirited stanzas : —

"Where constant mist enshrouds the rocks,
Shattered in earth's primeval shocks,
And niggard Nature ever mocks
The laborer's toil,

"I roam through clans of savage men,
Untamed by arts, untaught by pen;
Or cower within some squalid den
O'er reeking soil.

"Through paths that halt from stone to stone,
Amid the din of tongues unknown,
One image haunts my soul alone,
Thine, gentle Thrale!

"Soothes she, I ask, her spouse's care?
Does mother-love its charge prepare?
Stores she her mind with knowledge rare,
Or lively tale?

"Forget me not! thy faith I claim,
Holding a faith that cannot die,
That fills with thy benignant name
These shores of Sky."

"On another occasion," says Mrs. Thrale, in the "Anecdotes," "I can boast verses from Dr. Johnson. As I went into his room the morning of my birthday once and said to him, 'Nobody sends me any verses now, because I am five-and-thirty years old; and Stella was fed with them till forty-six, I remember.' My being just recovered from illness and confinement will account for the manner in which he burst out suddenly, for so he did without the least previous hesitation whatsoever, and without having entertained the smallest intention towards it half a minute before : —

“ ‘ Oft in danger, yet alive,
 We are come to thirty-five;
 Long may better years arrive,
 Better years than thirty-five.
 Could philosophers contrive
 Life to stop at thirty-five,
 Time his hours should never drive
 O'er the bounds of thirty-five.
 High to soar, and deep to dive,
 Nature gives at thirty-five.
 Ladies, stock and tend your hive,
 Trifle not at thirty-five;
 For howe'er we boast and strive,
 Life declines from thirty-five:
 He that ever hopes to thrive
 Must begin by thirty-five;
 And all who wisely wish to wive
 Must look on Thrale at thirty-five.’

“ ‘ And now,’ said he, as I was writing them down, ‘ you may see what it is to come for poetry to a dictionary-maker ; you may observe that the rhymes run in alphabetical order exactly.’ And so they do.”

Byron's estimate of life at the same age, is somewhat different : —

“ Too old for youth — too young, at thirty-five
 To herd with boys, or hoard with good threescore,
 I wonder people should be left alive.
 But since they are, that epoch is a bore.”

Lady Aldborough, whose best witticisms unluckily lie under the same merited ban as Rochester's best verses, resolved not to pass twenty-five, and had her passport made out accordingly till her death at eighty-five. She used to boast that, whenever a foreign official objected, she never failed to silence him by the remark, that he was the first gentleman of his country who ever told a lady she was older than she said she was. Actuated probably by a similar feeling, and in the hope of securing to herself the benefit of the doubt, Mrs. Thrale omitted in the “ Anecdotes ” the year when these verses were addressed to her, and a sharp controversy has been raised as to the respective ages of herself and Dr. Johnson at the time. It is thus summed up by one of the combatants : —

"In one place Mr. Croker says that at the commencement of the intimacy between Dr. Johnson and Mrs. Thrale, in 1765, the lady was twenty-five years old. In other places he says that Mrs. Thrale's thirty-fifth year coincided with Johnson's seventieth. Johnson was born in 1709. If, therefore, Mrs. Thrale's thirty-fifth year coincided with Johnson's seventieth, she could have been only twenty-one years old in 1765. This is not all. Mr. Croker, in another place, assigns the year 1777 as the date of the complimentary lines which Johnson made on Mrs. Thrale's thirty-fifth birthday. If this date be correct Mrs. Thrale must have been born in 1742, and could have been only twenty-three when her acquaintance commenced. Mr. Croker, therefore, gives us three different statements as to her age. Two of the three must be incorrect. We will not decide between them."*

"At the time of my first edition," rejoins Mr. Croker, "I was unable to ascertain precisely Mrs. Piozzi's age, but a subsequent publication, named '*Piozziana*,' fixes her birth, on her own authority, to the 16th January, 1740; yet even that is not quite conclusive, for she calls it 1740 old style, that is 1741. I must now, of course, adopt, though not without some doubt, the lady's reckoning." The difficulty, such as it is, arises from her not particularizing the style. In a letter to the author of "*Piozziana*," dated January 15th, 1817, she writes: "I am not well; nor, I fear, going to be well directly; but, be it as it may, to-morrow is my seventy-sixth anniversary, and I ought to be happy and thankful." The author's comment is: "In this letter she marks her birthday and her advanced age, seventy-seven; and much about that time, I recollect her showing me a valuable china bowl, in the inside of which was pasted a slip of paper, and on it written, '*With this bowl Hester Lynch Salusbury was baptized, 1740.*' She was born on the 16th, or, as according to the change of style, we should now reckon the 27th, of January, 1741."

In a letter to Mrs. Thrale of August 14th, 1780, Johnson writes: "If you try to plague me, I shall tell you that, according to Galen, life begins to decline at thirty-five." This gives Mr.

Croker a pretext for returning to the topic: "Mrs. Piozzi at her last birthday must have been forty, so that Johnson must have alluded to the sprightly verses in which he had celebrated Mrs. Thrale at thirty-five (see *ante*, p. 170, n. 3, and p. 471, n. 3 *); but since these notes were written I have found evidence under her own hand that my suspicion was just, and that she was born in 1740, new style." He does not state where or in what shape this evidence was found. It coincides with her letter of January 15th, 1817; but is irreconcilable with the slip of paper in the bowl, which we learn from her letters was pasted in by herself after her second marriage.

"This bowl," writes Mr. Salusbury, "is now in my possession. The slip of paper now in it is in my father's handwriting, and copied, I have heard him say, from the original slip, which was worn out by age and fingering. The exact words are, 'In this bason was baptized Hester Lynch Salusbury, 16th Jan. 1740-41 old style, at Bodville in Carnarvonshire.'"

The incident of the verses is thus narrated in "Thraliana": "And this year, 1777, when I told him that it was my birthday, and that I was then thirty-five years old, he repeated me these verses, which I wrote down from his mouth as he made them." If she was born in 1740-41, she must have been thirty-six in 1777; and there is no perfectly satisfactory settlement of the controversy, which many will think derives its sole importance from the two chief controversialists, for it is eminently characteristic of both of them.

The highest authorities differ equally about her looks. "My readers," says Boswell, "will naturally wish for some representation of the figures of this couple. Mr. Thrale was tall, well-proportioned, and stately. As for *Madam*, or *My Mistress*, by which epithets Johnson used to mention Mrs. Thrale, she was short, plump, and brisk." "He should have added," observes Mr. Croker, "that she was very pretty." This was not her own opinion, nor that of her contemporaries, although her face was attractive from animation and expression, and her personal appearance pleasing on the whole. Sometimes, when visiting the

* The references are to the handsome and complete edition of Boswell's "Life of Johnson," in one volume, royal octavo, published by Mr. Murray in 1860.

author of "Piozziana,"* she used to look at her little self, as she called it, and spoke drolly of what she once was, as if speaking of some one else; and one day, turning to him, she exclaimed: "No, I never was handsome: I had always too many strong points in my face for beauty." On his expressing a doubt of this, and hinting that Dr. Johnson was certainly an admirer of her personal charms, she replied that his devotion was at least as warm towards the table and the table-cloth at Streatham.

One day when he was ill, exceedingly low-spirited, and persuaded that death was not far distant, she appeared before him in a dark-colored gown, which his bad sight, and worse apprehensions, made him mistake for an iron-gray. "'Why do you delight,' said he, 'thus to thicken the gloom of misery that surrounds me? is not here sufficient accumulation of horror without anticipated mourning?' — 'This is not mourning, Sir!' said I, drawing the curtain, that the light might fall upon the silk, and show it was a purple mixed with green. — 'Well, well!' replied he, changing his voice; 'you little creatures should never wear those sort of clothes, however; they are unsuitable in every way. What! have not all insects gay colors?'"

According to the author of "Piozziana," who became acquainted with her late in life, "She was short, and though well-proportioned, broad, and deep-chested. Her hands were muscular and almost coarse, but her writing was, even in her eightieth year, exquisitely beautiful; and one day, while conversing with her on the subject of education, she observed that 'all Misses, now-a-days, wrote so like each other, that it was provoking;' adding, 'I love to see individuality of character, and abhor sameness, especially in what is feeble and flimsy.' Then, spreading her hand, she said, 'I believe I owe what you are pleased to call my good writing, to the shape of this hand, for my uncle, Sir Robert Cotton, thought it was too manly to be employed in writing like a boarding-school girl; and so I came by my vigorous, black manuscript.'"

* "Piozziana; or Recollections of the late Mrs. Piozzi, with Remarks. By a Friend." Moxon. 1833. These reminiscences, unluckily limited to the last eight or ten years of her life at Bath, contain much curious information, and leave a highly favorable impression of Mrs. Piozzi.

It was fortunate that the handwriting compensated for the hands; and as she attached great importance to blood and race, that she did not live to read Byron's "thoroughbred and tapering fingers," or to be shocked by his theory that "the hand is almost the only sign of blood which aristocracy can generate." Her Bath friend appeals to a miniature (engraved for this work) by Roche, of Bath, taken when she was in her seventy-seventh year. Like Cromwell, who told the painter that if he softened a harsh line, or so much as omitted a wart, he should never be paid a sixpence, — she desired the artist to paint her face deeply rouged, which it always was,* and to introduce a trivial deformity of the jaw, produced by a horse treading on her as she lay on the ground after a fall. In this respect she proved superior to Johnson; who, with all his love of truth, could not bear to be painted with his defects. He was displeased at being drawn holding a book close to his eye, and on its being suggested that Reynolds had painted himself with his ear-trumpet, he replied: "He may do as he likes, but I will not go down to posterity as Blinking Sam."

Reynolds's portrait of Mrs. Thrale conveys a highly agreeable impression of her; and so does Hogarth's when she sat to him for the principal figure in "The Lady's Last Stake." She was then only fourteen; and he probably idealized his model; but that he also produced a striking likeness, is obvious on comparing his picture with the professed portraits. The history of this picture (which has been engraved, at Lord Macaulay's sugges-

* "One day I called early at her house; and as I entered her drawing-room, she passed me, saying, 'Dear Sir, I will be with you in a few minutes; but, while I think of it, I must go to my dressing-closet and paint my face, which I forgot to do this morning.' Accordingly she soon returned, wearing the requisite quantity of bloom; which, it must be noticed, was not in the least like that of youth and beauty. I then said that I was surprised she should so far sacrifice to fashion, as to take that trouble. Her answer was that, as I might conclude, her practice of painting did not proceed from any silly compliance with Bath fashion, or any fashion; still less, if possible, from the desire of appearing younger than she was, but from this circumstance, that in early life she had worn rouge, as other young persons did in her day, as a part of dress; and after continuing the habit for some years, discovered that it had introduced a dead yellow color into her complexion, quite unlike that of her natural skin, and that she wished to conceal the deformity." — *Piozziana*.

tion, for this work) will be found in the Autobiography and the Letters.

Boswell's account of his first visit to Streatham gives a tolerably fair notion of the footing on which Johnson stood there, and the manner in which the interchange of mind was carried on between him and the hostess. This visit took place in October, 1769, four or five years after Johnson's introduction to her; and Boswell's absence from London, in which he had no fixed residence during Johnson's life, will hardly account for the neglect of his illustrious friend in not procuring him a privilege which he must have highly coveted and would doubtless have turned to good account.

"On the 6th of October I complied with this obliging invitation; and found, at an elegant villa, six miles from town, every circumstance that can make society pleasing. Johnson, though quite at home, was yet looked up to with an awe, tempered by affection, and seemed to be equally the care of his host and hostess. I rejoiced at seeing him so happy."

"Mrs. Thrale disputed with him on the merit of Prior. He attacked him powerfully; said he wrote of love like a man who had never felt it; his love verses were college verses: and he repeated the song, 'Alexis shunned his fellow-swains,' &c. in so ludicrous a manner, as to make us all wonder how any one could have been pleased with such fantastical stuff. Mrs. Thrale stood to her guns with great courage, in defence of amorous ditties, which Johnson despised, till he at last silenced her by saying, 'My dear lady, talk no more of this. Nonsense can be defended but by nonsense.'

"Mrs. Thrale then praised Garrick's talents for light, gay poetry; and, as a specimen, repeated his song in 'Florizel and Perdita,' and dwelt with peculiar pleasure on this line:—

"'I'd smile with the simple, and feed with the poor.'

"*Johnson.* — 'Nay, my dear lady, this will never do. Poor David! Smile with the simple! — what folly is that? And who would feed with the poor that can help it? No, no; let me smile with the wise, and feed with the rich.'" Boswell adds, that

he repeated this sally to Garrick, and wondered to find his sensibility as a writer not a little irritated by it; on which Mrs. Thrale remarks, "How odd to go and tell the man!"

The independent tone she took when she deemed the Doctor unreasonable, is also proved by Boswell in his report of what took place at Streatham in reference to Lord Marchmont's offer to supply information for the Life of Pope.

"Elated with the success of my spontaneous exertion to procure material and respectable aid to Johnson for his very favorite work, 'The Lives of the Poets,' I hastened down to Mr. Thrale's, at Streatham, where he now was, that I might insure his being at home next day; and after dinner, when I thought he would receive the good news in the best humor, I announced it eagerly: 'I have been at work for you to-day, Sir. I have been with Lord Marchmont. He bade me tell you he has a great respect for you, and will call on you to-morrow at one o'clock, and communicate all he knows about Pope.' *Johnson*. 'I shall not be in town to-morrow. I don't care to know about Pope.' *Mrs. Thrale* (surprised, as I was, and a little angry). 'I suppose, Sir, Mr. Boswell thought that as you are to write Pope's Life, you would wish to know about him.' *Johnson*. 'Wish! why yes. If it rained knowledge, I'd hold out my hand; but I would not give myself the trouble to go in quest of it.' There was no arguing with him at the moment. Some time afterwards he said, 'Lord Marchmont will call on me, and then I shall call on Lord Marchmont.' Mrs. Thrale was uneasy at this unaccountable caprice; and told me, that if I did not take care to bring about a meeting between Lord Marchmont and him, it would never take place, which would be a great pity."

The ensuing conversation is a good sample of the freedom and variety of "talk" in which Johnson luxuriated, and shows how important a part Mrs. Thrale played in it:—

"Mrs. Thrale told us, that a curious clergyman of our acquaintance (Dr. Lort is named in the margin) had discovered a licentious stanza, which Pope had originally in his 'Universal Prayer,' before the stanza, —

" 'What conscience dictates to be done,
Or warns us not to do,' &c.

It was this : —

“ ‘ Can sins of moment claim the rod
Of everlasting fires ?
And that offend great Nature’s God
Which Nature’s self inspires ? ’ ”

and that Dr. Johnson observed, it had been borrowed from *Guarini*. There are, indeed, in *Pastor Fido*, many such flimsy, superficial reasonings as that in the last two lines of this stanza.

“ *Boswell*. ‘ In that stanza of Pope’s, “rod of fires” is certainly a bad metaphor.’ *Mrs. Thrale*. ‘ And “sins of moment” is a faulty expression ; for its true import is *momentous*, which cannot be intended.’ *Johnson*. ‘ It must have been written “of moments.” Of *moment*, is *momentous* ; of *moments*, *momentary*. I warrant you, however, Pope wrote this stanza, and some friend struck it out.’ ”

“ Talking of divorces, I asked if Othello’s doctrine was not plausible : —

“ ‘ He that is robbed, not wanting what is stolen,
Let him not know ’t, and he’s not robbed at all.’ ”

Dr. Johnson and Mrs. Thrale joined against this. *Johnson*. ‘ Ask any man if he’d wish not to know of such an injury.’ ”

Boswell. ‘ Would you tell your friend, to make him unhappy ? ’ ”

Johnson. ‘ Perhaps, Sir, I should not ; but that would be from prudence on my own account. A man would tell his father.’ ”

Boswell. ‘ Yes ; because he would not have spurious children to get any share of the family inheritance.’ ”

Mrs. Thrale. ‘ Or he would tell his brother.’ ”

Boswell. ‘ Certainly his *elder* brother.’ ”

“ Would you tell Mr. — ? ’ ” (naming a gentleman who assuredly was not in the least danger of so miserable a disgrace, though married to a fine woman).

Johnson. ‘ No, Sir ; because it would do no good ; he is so sluggish, he’d never go to Parliament and get through a divorce.’ ”

Marginal Note : “ Langton.”

One great charm of her companionship to cultivated men was her familiarity with the learned languages, as well as with French, Italian, and Spanish. The author of “*Piozziana*” says : “ She not only read and wrote Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, but had for sixty years constantly and ardently studied the Scriptures

and the works of commentators in the original languages." He probably over-estimated her acquirements, which Boswell certainly under-estimates when he speaks slightly of them on the strength of Johnson's having said: "It is a great mistake to suppose that she is above him (Thrale) in literary attainments. She is more flippant, but he has ten times her learning: he is a regular scholar; but her learning is that of a school-boy in one of the lower forms." If this were so, it is strange that Thrale should cut so poor a figure, should seem little better than a non-entity, whilst every imaginable topic was under animated discussion at his table; for Boswell was more ready to report the husband's sayings than the wife's. In a marginal note on one of the printed letters she says: "Mr. Thrale was a very merry-talking man in 1760; but the distress of 1772, which affected his health, his hopes, and his whole soul, affected his temper too. Perkins called it being planet-struck, and I am not sure he was ever completely the same man again." The notes of his conversation during the antecedent period are equally meagre.

No one would have expected to find her as much at home in Greek and Latin authors as a man of fair ability who had received and profited by a university education, but she could appreciate a classical allusion or quotation, and translate off-hand a Latin epigram into idiomatic English.

"Mary Aston," said Johnson, "was a beauty and a scholar, and a wit and a whig; and she talked all in praise of liberty; and so I made this epigram upon her. She was the loveliest creature I ever saw!

"*Liber ne esse velim, suasisti, pulchra Maria,
Ut maneam liber, pulchra Maria, vale!*"

"Will it do this way in English, Sir?" (said Mrs. Thrale):—

"Persuasions to freedom fall oddly from you,
If freedom we seek, fair Maria, adieu."

Mr. Croker's version is:—

"You wish me, fair Maria, to be free,
Then, fair Maria, I must fly from thee."

Boswell also has tried his hand at it; and a correspondent

of the "Gentleman's Magazine" suggests that Johnson had in his mind an epigram on a young lady who appeared at a masquerade in Paris, habited as a Jesuit, during the height of the contention between the Jansenists and Molinists concerning free-will : —

" On s'étonne ici que Calviniste
Eût pris l'habit de Moliniste,
Puisque que cette jeune beauté
Ôte à chacun sa liberté,
N'est ce pas une Janséniste." *

Mrs. Thrale took the lead even when her husband might be expected to strike in, as when Johnson was declaiming paradoxically against action in oratory : "Action can have no effect on reasonable minds. It may augment noise, but it never can enforce argument." *Mrs. Thrale*. "What then, Sir, becomes of Demosthenes' saying, Action, action, action?" *Johnson*. "Demosthenes, Madam, spoke to an assembly of brutes, to a barbarous people." "The polished Athenians!" is her marginal protest, and a most conclusive one.

In English literature she was rarely at fault. In reference to the flattery lavished on Garrick by Lord Mansfield and Lord Chatham, Johnson had said, "When he whom everybody else flatters, flatters me, then I am truly happy." *Mrs. Thrale*. "The sentiment is in Congreve, I think." *Johnson*. "Yes, Madam, in 'The Way of the World.'

"If there's delight in love, 't is when I see
The heart that others bleed for, bleed for me.'"

The *laudari a laudato viro* is nearer the mark.

It would be easy to heap proof upon proof of the value and variety of Mrs. Thrale's contributions to the colloquial treasures accumulated by Boswell and other members of the set; and

* "Menagiana," Vol. III. p. 376. Edition of 1716. Equally happy were Lord Chesterfield's lines to a young lady who appeared at a Dublin ball, with an orange breastknot: —

"Pretty Tory, where's the jest
To wear that riband on thy breast,
When that same breast betraying shows
The whiteness of the rebel rose?"

White was adopted by the malcontent Irish of the period as the French emblem.

Johnson's deliberate testimony to her good qualities of head and heart will far more than counterbalance any passing expressions of disapproval or reproof which her mistimed vivacity, or alleged disregard of scrupulous accuracy in narrative, may have called forth. No two people ever lived much together for a series of years without many fretful, complaining, dissatisfied, uncongenial moments, — without letting drop captious or unkind expressions utterly at variance with their habitual feelings and their matured judgments of each other. The hasty word, the passing sarcasm, the sly hit at an acknowledged foible, should count for nothing in the estimate when contrasted with earnest and deliberate assurances, proceeding from one who was always too proud to flatter, and in no mood for idle compliment when he wrote : —

"Never (he writes in 1773) imagine that your letters are long; they are always too short for my curiosity. I do not know that I was ever content with a single perusal. My nights are grown again very uneasy and troublesome. I know not that the country will mend them; but I hope your company will mend my days. Though I cannot now expect much attention, and would not wish for more than can be spared from the poor dear lady (her mother), yet I shall see you and hear you every now and then; and to see and hear you, is always to hear wit and to see virtue."

He would not suffer her to be lightly spoken of in his presence, nor permit his name to be coupled jocularly with hers. "I yesterday told him," says Boswell, when they were traversing the Highlands, "I was thinking of writing a poetical letter to him, on his return from Scotland, in the style of Swift's humorous epistle in the character of Mary Gulliver to her husband, Captain Lemuel Gulliver, on his return to England from the country of the Houyhnhnms : —

"At early morn I to the market haste,
 Studious in ev'rything to please thy taste.
 A curious *fowl* and *sparagrass* I chose;
 (For I remember you were fond of those :)
 Threë shillings cost the first, the last seven groats;
 Sullen you turn from both, and call for OATS."

He laughed, and asked in whose name I would write it. I said

in Mrs. Thrale's. He was angry. 'Sir, if you have any sense of decency or delicacy, you won't do that.' *Boswell*. 'Then let it be in Cole's, the landlord of the Mitre tavern, where we have so often sat together.' *Johnson*. 'Ay, that may do.'"

Again, at Inverary, when Johnson called for a gill of whiskey that he might know what makes a Scotchman happy, and Boswell proposed Mrs. Thrale as their toast, he would not have *her* drunk in whiskey. Peter Pindar has maliciously added to this reproof: —

"We supped most royally, were vastly frisky,
When Johnson ordered up a gill of whiskey.
Taking the glass, says I, 'Here's Mistress Thrale,'
'Drink her in *whiskey* not,' said he, 'but *ale*.'"

So far from making light of her scholarship, he frequently accepted her as a partner in translations from the Latin. The translations from Boethius, printed in the second volume of the Letters, are their joint composition.

After recapitulating Johnson's other contributions to literature in 1766, Boswell says, "'The Fountains,' a beautiful little fairy tale in prose, written with exquisite simplicity, is one of Johnson's productions; and *I cannot withhold* from Mrs. Thrale the praise of being the author of that admirable poem, 'The Three Warnings.'" *Marginal note*: "How sorry he is!" Both the tale and the poem were written for a collection of "Miscellanies," published by Mrs. Williams in that year. The character of Floretta in "The Fountains" was intended for Mrs. Thrale, and parts of it received touches from her ready and fruitful pen. Her fugitive pieces, mostly in verse, thrown off from time to time at all periods of her life, are numerous; and the best of these that have been recovered will be included in these volumes. In a letter to the author of "Piozziana," she says: "When Wilkes and Liberty were at their highest tide, I was bringing or losing children every year; and my studies were confined to my nursery; so, it came into my head one day to send an infant alphabet to the 'St. James Chronicle': —

"'A was an Alderman, factious and proud;
B was a Bellas that blustered aloud, &c.'"

In a week's time Dr. Johnson asked me if I knew who wrote it? 'Why, who did write it, Sir?' said I. 'Steevens,' was the reply. Some time after that, years for aught I know, he mentioned to me Steevens's veracity! 'No, no,' answered H. L. P., 'anything but that;' and told my story; showing him by incontestable proofs that it was mine. Johnson did not utter a word, and we never talked about it any more. I durst not introduce the subject; but it served to hinder S. from visiting at the house: I suppose Johnson kept him away."

It does not appear that Steevens claimed the Alphabet; which may have suggested the celebrated squib that appeared in the "New Whig Guide," and was popularly attributed to Mr. Croker. It was headed, "The Political Alphabet; or, the Young Member's A B C," and begins:—

"A was an Althorpe, as dull as a hog;
B was black Brougham, a surly cur dog;
C was a Cochrane, all stripped of his lace."

What widely different associations are now awakened by these names! The sting is in the tail:—

"W was a Warre, 'twixt a wasp and a worm,
But X Y and Z are not found in this form,
Unless Moore, Martin, and Creevey be said
(As the last of mankind) to be X Y and Z."

Amongst Miss Reynolds's "Recollections" will be found: "On the praises of Mrs. Thrale he (Johnson) used to dwell with a peculiar delight, a paternal fondness, expressive of conscious exultation in being so intimately acquainted with her. One day, in speaking of her to Mr. Harris, author of 'Hermes,' and expatiating on her various perfections,—the solidity of her virtues, the brilliancy of her wit, and the strength of her understanding, &c.—he quoted some lines (a stanza, I believe, but from what author I know not), with which he concluded his most eloquent eulogium, and of these I retained but the two last lines:—

" 'Virtues — of such a generous kind,
Good in the last recesses of the mind.' "

The place assigned to Mrs. Thrale by the popular voice

amongst the most cultivated and accomplished women of the day, is fixed by some verses printed in the "Morning Herald" of March 12th, 1782, which attracted much attention. They were commonly attributed to Mr. (afterwards Sir W. W.) Pepys, and Madame d'Arblay, who alludes to them complacently, thought them his; but he subsequently repudiated the authorship, and the editor of her Memoirs believes that they were written by Dr. Burney. They were provoked by the proneness of the Herald to indulge in complimentary allusions to ladies of the demirep genus:—

"HERALD, wherefore thus proclaim
Naught of woman but the *shame*?
Quit, O quit, at least awhile,
Perdita's too luscious smile;
Wanton Worsely, stilted Daly,
Heroines of each blackguard alley;
Better sure record in story
Such as shine their sex's glory!
Herald! haste, with me proclaim
Those of literary fame.
Hannah More's pathetic pen,
Painting high th' impassioned scene;
Carter's piety and learning,
Little Burney's quick discerning;
Cowley's neatly pointed wit,
Healing those her satires hit;
Smiling Streatfield's iv'ry neck,
Nose, and notions — *à la Grecque*!
Let Chapone retain a place,
And the mother of her Grace,
Each art of conversation knowing,
High-bred, elegant Boscawen;
Thrale, in whose expressive eyes
Sits a soul above disguise,
Skilled with wit and sense t' impart
Feelings of a generous heart.
Lucan, Leveson, Greville, Crewe;
Fertile-minded Montague,
Who makes each rising art her care,
'And brings her knowledge from afar!'
Whilst her tuneful tongue defends
Authors dead, and absent friends;
Bright in genius, pure in fame:—
Herald, haste, and these proclaim!"

These lines merit attention for the sake of the comparison they

invite. An outcry has recently been raised against the laxity of modern fashion, in permitting venal beauty to receive open homage in our parks and theatres, and to be made the subject of prurient gossip by maids and matrons who should ignore its existence. But we need not look far beneath the surface of social history to discover that the irregularity in question is only a partial revival of the practice of our grandfathers and grandmothers, much as a crinoline may be regarded as a modified reproduction of the hoop. Junius thus denounces the Duke of Grafton's indecorous devotion to Nancy Parsons: "It is not the private indulgence, but the public insult, of which I complain. The name of Miss Parsons would hardly have been known, if the First Lord of the Treasury had not led her in triumph through the Opera House, even in the presence of the Queen." Lord March (afterwards Duke of Queensberry) was a lord of the bedchamber in the decorous court of George the Third, when he wrote thus to Selwyn: "I was prevented from writing to you last Friday, by being at Newmarket with my little girl (Signora Zamperini, a noted dancer and singer). I had the whole family and Cocchi. The beauty went with me in my chaise, and the rest in the old landau."

We have had Boswell's impression of his first visit to Streatham; and Madame D'Arblay's account of hers confirms the notion that My Mistress, not My Master, was the presiding genius of the place.

"*London, August (1778).*— I have now to write an account of the most consequential day I have spent since my birth: namely, my Streatham visit.

"Our journey to Streatham was the least pleasant part of the day, for the roads were dreadfully dusty, and I was really in the fidgets from thinking what my reception might be, and from fearing they would expect a less awkward and backward kind of person than I was sure they would find.

"Mr. Thrale's house is white, and very pleasantly situated, in a fine paddock. Mrs. Thrale was strolling about, and came to us as we got out of the chaise.

"She then received me, taking both my hands, and with mixed politeness and cordiality welcoming me to Streatham. She led

me into the house, and addressed herself almost wholly for a few minutes to my father, as if to give me an assurance she did not mean to regard me as a show, or to distress or frighten me by drawing me out. Afterwards she took me up stairs, and showed me the house, and said she had very much wished to see me at Streatham, and should always think herself much obliged to Dr. Burney for his goodness in bringing me, which she looked upon as a very great favor.

“But though we were some time together, and though she was very civil, she did not *hint* at my book, and I love her much more than ever for her delicacy in avoiding a subject which she could not but see would have greatly embarrassed me.

“When we returned to the music-room, we found Miss Thrale was with my father. Miss Thrale is a very fine girl, about fourteen years of age, but cold and reserved, though full of knowledge and intelligence.

“Soon after, Mrs. Thrale took me to the library; she talked a little while upon common topics, and then, at last, she mentioned ‘Evelina.’

“I now prevailed upon Mrs. Thrale to let me amuse myself, and she went to dress. I then prowled about to choose some book, and I saw, upon the reading-table, ‘Evelina.’ I had just fixed upon a new translation of Cicero’s ‘Lælius,’ when the library door was opened, and Mr. Seward entered. I instantly put away my book, because I dreaded being thought studious and affected. He offered his service to find anything for me, and then, in the same breath, ran on to speak of the book with which I had myself ‘favored the world!’

“The exact words he began with I cannot recollect, for I was actually confounded by the attack; and his abrupt manner of letting me know he was *au fait* equally astonished and provoked me. How different from the delicacy of Mr. and Mrs. Thrale!”

A high French authority has laid down that politeness or good breeding consists in rendering to all what is socially their due. This definition is imperfect. Good breeding is best displayed by putting people at their ease; and Mrs. Thrale’s manner of putting the young authoress at her ease was the perfection of delicacy and tact.

If Johnson's entrance on the stage had been premeditated, it could hardly have been more dramatically ordered.

"When we were summoned to dinner, Mrs. Thrale made my father and me sit on each side of her. I said that I hoped I did not take Dr. Johnson's place ; — for he had not yet appeared.

" 'No,' answered Mrs. Thrale, 'he will sit by you, which I am sure will give him great pleasure.'

"Soon after we were seated, this great man entered. I have so true a veneration for him, that the very sight of him inspires me with delight and reverence, notwithstanding the cruel infirmities to which he is subject ; for he has almost perpetual convulsive movements, either of his hands, lips, feet, or knees, and sometimes of all together.

"Mrs. Thrale introduced me to him, and he took his place. We had a noble dinner, and a most elegant dessert. Dr. Johnson, in the middle of dinner, asked Mrs. Thrale what was in some little pies that were near him.

" 'Mutton,' answered she, 'so I don't ask you to eat any, because I know you despise it.'

" 'No, Madam, no,' cried he ; 'I despise nothing that is good of its sort ; but I am too proud now to eat of it. Sitting by Miss Burney makes me very proud to-day !'

" 'Miss Burney,' said Mrs. Thrale, laughing, 'you must take great care of your heart if Dr. Johnson attacks it ; for I assure you he is not often successful.'

" 'What's that you say, Madam ?' cried he ; 'are you making mischief between the young lady and me already ?'

"A little while after he drank Miss Thrale's health and mine, and then added : —

" 'T is a terrible thing that we cannot wish young ladies well, without wishing them to become old women.' "

Madame D'Arblay's memoirs are sadly defaced by egotism, and gratified vanity may have had a good deal to do with her unqualified admiration of Mrs. Thrale, for "Evelina" (recently published) was the unceasing topic of exaggerated eulogy during the entire visit. Still so acute an observer could not be essentially wrong in an account of her reception, which is in the highest degree favorable to her newly acquired friend. Of her second visit she says : —

“Our journey was charming. The kind Mrs. Thrale would give courage to the most timid. She did not ask me questions, or catechize me upon what I knew, or use any means to draw me out, but made it her business to draw herself out, — that is, to start subjects, to support them herself, and take all the weight of the conversation, as if it behooved her to find me entertainment. But I am so much in love with her, that I shall be obliged to run away from the subject, or shall write of nothing else.

“When we arrived here, Mrs. Thrale showed me my room, which is an exceeding pleasant one, and then conducted me to the library, there to divert myself while she dressed.

“Miss Thrale soon joined me : and I begin to like her. Mr. Thrale was neither well nor in spirits all day. Indeed, he seems not to be a happy man, though he has every means of happiness in his power. But I think I have rarely seen a very rich man with a light heart and light spirits.”

The concluding remark, coming from such a source, may supply an improving subject of meditation or inquiry ; if found true, it may help to suppress envy and promote contentment. Thrale’s state of health, however, accounts for his depression, independently of his wealth, which rested on too precarious a foundation to allow of unbroken confidence and gayety.

“At tea (continues the diarist) we all met again, and Dr. Johnson was gayly sociable. He gave a very droll account of the children of Mr. Langton.

“‘Who,’ he said, ‘might be very good children if they were let alone ; but the father is never easy when he is not making them do something which they cannot do ; they must repeat a fable, or a speech, or the Hebrew alphabet ; and they might as well count twenty, for what they know of the matter : however, the father says half, for he prompts every other word. But he could not have chosen a man who would have been less entertained by such means.’

“‘I believe not !’ cried Mrs. Thrale ; ‘nothing is more ridiculous than parents cramming their children’s nonsense down other people’s throats. I keep mine as much out of the way as I can.’

“‘Yours, Madam,’ answered he, ‘are in nobody’s way ; no children can be better managed or less troublesome ; but your

fault is, a too great perverseness in not allowing anybody to give them anything. Why should they not have a cherry or a gooseberry, as well as bigger children ?’

“ Indeed, the freedom with which Dr. Johnson condemns whatever he disapproves is astonishing ; and the strength of words he uses would, to most people, be intolerable ; but Mrs. Thrale seems to have a sweetness of disposition that equals all her other excellences, and far from making a point of vindicating herself, she generally receives his admonitions with the most respectful silence.

“ But I fear to say all I think at present of Mrs. Thrale, lest some flaws should appear by and by, that may make me think differently. And yet, why should I not indulge the *now*, as well as the *then*, since it will be with so much more pleasure ? In short, I do think her delightful ; she has talents to create admiration, good humor to excite love, understanding to give entertainment, and a heart which, like my dear father’s, seems already fitted for another world.”

Another of the conversations which occurred during this visit is characteristic of all parties : —

“ I could not help expressing my amazement at his universal readiness upon all subjects, and Mrs. Thrale said to him :

“ ‘ Sir, Miss Burney wonders at your patience with such stuff ; but I tell her you are used to me, for I believe I torment you with more foolish questions than anybody else dares do.’

“ ‘ No, Madam,’ said he, ‘ you don’t torment me ; — you tease me, indeed, sometimes.’

“ ‘ Ay, so I do, Dr. Johnson, and I wonder you bear with my nonsense.’

“ ‘ No, Madam, you never talk nonsense ; you have as much sense, and more wit, than any woman I know !’

“ ‘ O,’ cried Mrs. Thrale, blushing, ‘ it is my turn to go under the table this morning, Miss Burney !’

“ ‘ And yet,’ continued the Doctor, with the most comical look, ‘ I have known all the wits, from Mrs. Montagu down to Bet Flint !’

“ ‘ Bet Flint !’ cried Mrs. Thrale ; ‘ pray who is she ?’

“ ‘ O, a fine character, Madam ! She was habitually a slut and a drunkard, and occasionally a thief and a harlot.’

“‘And, for Heaven’s sake, how came you to know her?’

“‘Why, Madam, she figured in the literary world, too! Bet Flint wrote her own life, and called herself Cassandra, and it was in verse. So Bet brought me her verses to correct; but I gave her half a crown, and she liked it as well.’

“‘And pray what became of her, Sir?’

“‘Why, Madam, she stole a quilt from the man of the house, and he had her taken up: but Bet Flint had a spirit not to be subdued; so when she found herself obliged to go to jail, she ordered a sedan chair, and bid her footboy walk before her. However, the boy proved refractory, for he was ashamed, though his mistress was not.’

“‘And did she ever get out of jail again, Sir?’

“‘Yes, Madam; when she came to her trial, the judge acquitted her. “So now,” she said to me, “the quilt is my own, and now I’ll make a petticoat of it.”* O, I loved Bet Flint!’

“‘Bless me, Sir,’ cried Mrs. Thrale, ‘how can all these vagabonds contrive to get at *you*, of all people?’

“‘O the dear creatures!’ cried he, laughing heartily, ‘I can’t but be glad to see them!’”

Madame D’Arblay’s notes of the conversation and mode of life at Streatham are full and spirited, and exhibit Johnson in moods and situations in which he was seldom seen by Boswell. The adroitness with which he divided his attentions amongst the ladies, blending approval with instruction, and softening contradiction or reproof by gallantry, gives plausibility to his otherwise paradoxical claim to be considered a polite man.† He obviously knew how to set about it, and (theoretically at least) was no mean proficient in that art of pleasing which attracts

* This story is told by Boswell, *roy.* 8vo. edit. p. 688.

† “When the company were retired, we happened to be talking of Dr. Barnard, the provost of Eton, who died about that time; and after a long and just eulogium on his wit, his learning, and goodness of heart — ‘He was the only man, too,’ says Mr. Johnson, quite seriously, ‘that did justice to my good breeding: and you may observe that I am well-bred to a degree of needless scrupulosity. No man,’ continued he, not observing the amazement of his hearers, ‘no man is so cautious not to interrupt another; no man thinks it so necessary to appear attentive when others are speaking; no man so steadily refuses preference to himself, or so willingly bestows it on another, as I do; nobody holds so strongly as I do the necessity of ceremony, and the ill effects which follow the breach of it: yet people think me rude; but Barnard did me justice.’” — *Anecdotes*.

“Rather by deference than compliment,
And wins e'en by a delicate dissent.”

Sir Henry Bulwer (in his “France”) says that Louis the Fourteenth was entitled to be called a man of genius, if only from the delicate beauty of his compliments. Mrs. Thrale awards the palm of excellence in the same path to Johnson. “Your compliments, Sir, are made seldom, but when they are made, they have an elegance unequalled; but then, when you are angry, who dares make speeches so bitter and so cruel?” “I am sure,” she adds, after a semblance of defence on his part, “I have had my share of scolding from you.” *Johnson*. “It is true, you have, but you have borne it like an angel, and you have been the better for it.” As the discussion proceeds, he accuses her of often provoking him to say severe things by unreasonable commendation,—a common mode of acquiring a character for amiability at the expense of one’s intimates, who are made to appear uncharitable by being thus constantly placed on the depreciating side.

Some years prior to this period (1778) Mrs. Thrale’s mind and character had undergone a succession of the most trying ordeals, and was tempered and improved, without being hardened, by them.

One child after another died at the age when the bereavement is most affecting to a mother. Her husband’s health kept her in a constant state of apprehension for his life, and his affairs became embarrassed to the very verge of bankruptcy. So long as they remained prosperous, he insisted on her not meddling with them in any way, and even required her to keep to her drawing-room and leave the conduct of their domestic establishment to the butler and housekeeper. But when (from circumstances detailed in the “Autobiography”) his fortune was seriously endangered, he wisely and gladly availed himself of her prudence and energy, and was saved by so doing. I have now before me a collection of autograph letters from her to Mr. Perkins, then manager and afterwards one of the proprietors of the brewery, from which it appears that she paid the most minute attention to the business, besides undertaking the superintendence of her own hereditary estate in Wales. On

September 28, 1773, she writes to Mr. Perkins, who was on a commercial journey:—

“Mr. Thrale is still upon his little tour; I opened a letter from you at the counting-house this morning, and am sorry to find you have so much trouble with Grant and his affairs. How glad I shall be to hear that matter is settled at all to your satisfaction. His letter and remittance came while I was there to-day. . . . Careless, of the ‘Blue Posts,’ has turned refractory, and applied to Hoare’s people, who have sent him in their beer. I called on him to-day, however, and by dint of an unwearied solicitation (for I kept him at the coach side a full half-hour) I got his order for six butts more as the final trial.”

Examples of fine ladies pressing tradesmen for their votes with compromising importunity are far from rare, but it would be difficult to find a parallel for Johnson’s “Hetty” doing duty as a commercial traveller. She was simultaneously obliged to anticipate the electioneering exploits of the Duchess of Devonshire and Mrs. Crewe; and in after life, having occasion to pass through Southwark, she expresses her astonishment at no longer recognizing a place, every hole and corner of which she had three times visited as a canvasser.

After the death of Mr. Thrale, a friend of Mr. H. Thornton canvassed the borough on behalf of that gentleman. He waited on Mrs. Thrale, who promised her support. She concluded her obliging expressions by saying: “I wish your friend success, and I think he will have it: he may probably come in for two Parliaments, but if he tries for a third, were he an angel from heaven, the people of Southwark would cry, ‘Not *this* man, but Barabbas.’” *

On one of her canvassing expeditions, Johnson accompanied her, and a rough fellow, a hatter by trade, seeing the moralist’s hat in a state of decay, seized it suddenly with one hand, and clapping him on the back with the other, cried out, “Ah, Master Johnson, this is no time to be thinking about hats.” “No, no, Sir,” replied the Doctor, “hats are of no use now, as you say,

* Miss Lætitia Matilda Hawkins vouches for this story. — “Memoir, &c.” Vol. I. p. 66, note, where she adds: “I have heard it said, that into whatever company she (Mrs. T.) fell, she could be the most agreeable person in it.”

except to throw up in the air and huzza with ;” accompanying his words with the true election halloo.

Thrale had serious thoughts of repaying Johnson’s electioneering aid in kind, by bringing him into Parliament. Sir John Hawkins says that Thrale had two meetings with the minister (Lord North), who at first seemed inclined to find Johnson a seat, but eventually discountenanced the project. Lord Stowell told Mr. Croker that Lord North did not feel quite sure that Johnson’s support might not sometimes prove rather an encumbrance than a help. “His lordship perhaps thought, and not unreasonably, that, like the elephant in the battle, he was quite as likely to trample down his friends as his foes.” Flood doubted whether Johnson, being long used to sententious brevity and the short flights of conversation, would have succeeded in the expanded kind of argument required in public speaking. Burke’s opinion was, that if he had come early into Parliament, he would have been the greatest speaker ever known in it. Upon being told this by Reynolds, he exclaimed, “I should like to try my hand now.” On Boswell’s adding that he wished he *had*, Mrs. Thrale writes : “Boswell had leisure for curiosity : ministers had not. Boswell would have been equally amused by his failure as by his success ; but to Lord North there would have been no joke at all in the experiment ending untowardly.”

He was equally ready with advice and encouragement during the difficulties connected with the brewery. He was not of opinion, with Aristotle and Parson Adams, that trade is below a philosopher ; * and he eagerly busied himself in computing the cost of the malt and the possible profits on the ale. In October, 1772, he writes from Lichfield : —

“Do not suffer little things to disturb you. The brew-house must be the scene of action, and the subject of speculation. The first consequence of our late trouble ought to be, an endeavor to brew at a cheaper rate ; an endeavor, not violent and transient, but steady and continual, prosecuted with total contempt of censure or wonder, and animated by resolution not to stop while

* “Trade, answered Adams, is below a philosopher, as Aristotle proves in his first chapter of ‘Politics,’ and unnatural, as it is managed now.” — *Joseph Andrews*.

more can be done. Unless this can be done, nothing can help us; and if this be done, we shall not want help.

"Surely there is something to be saved; there is to be saved whatever is the difference between vigilance and neglect, between parsimony and profusion.

"The price of malt has risen again. It is now two pounds eight shillings the quarter. Ale is sold in the public houses at sixpence a quart, a price which I never heard of before.

"I am, &c."

In November of the same year, from Ashbourne:—

"DEAR MADAM: So many days and never a letter!—*Fugere fides, pietasque pudorque*. This is Turkish usage. And I have been hoping and hoping. But you are so glad to have me out of your mind.

"I think you were quite right in your advice about the thousand pounds, for the payment could not have been delayed long; and a short delay would have lessened credit, without advancing interest. But in great matters you are hardly ever mistaken."

In May 17, 1773:—

"Why should Mr. T—— suppose, that what I took the liberty of suggesting was concerted with you? He does not know how much I revolve his affairs, and how honestly I desire his prosperity. I hope he has let the hint take some hold of his mind."

In the copy of the printed letters presented by Mrs. Thrale to Sir James Fellowes, the blank is filled up with the name of Thrale, and the passage is thus annotated in her handwriting:—

"Concerning his (Thrale's) connection with quack chemists, quacks of all sorts; jumping up in the night to go to Marlbro' Street from Southwark, after some advertising mountebank, at hazard of his life."

That Johnson's advice was neither thrown away nor undervalued, may be inferred from an incident related by Boswell. Mr. Perkins had hung up in the counting-house a fine proof of the mezzotinto of Dr. Johnson by Doughty; and when Mrs. Thrale asked him, somewhat flippantly, "Why do you put him up in the counting-house?" Mr. Perkins answered, "Because, Madam, I wish to have one wise man there." "Sir" said John-

son, "I thank you. It is a very handsome compliment, and I believe you speak sincerely."

He was in the habit of paying the most minute attention to every branch of domestic economy, and his suggestions are invariably marked by shrewdness and good sense. Thus when Mrs. Thrale was giving evening parties, he told her that, though few people might be hungry after a late dinner, she should always have a good supply of cakes and sweetmeats on a side table, and that some cold meat and a bottle of wine would often be found acceptable. Notwithstanding the imperfection of his eyesight, and his own slovenliness, he was a critical observer of female dress and demeanor, and found fault without ceremony or compunction when any of his canons of taste or propriety were infringed. Several amusing examples are enumerated by Mrs. Thrale:—

"I commended a young lady for her beauty and pretty behavior one day, however, to whom I thought no objections could have been made. 'I saw her,' said Dr. Johnson, 'take a pair of scissors in her left hand though; and for all her father is now become a nobleman, and as you say excessively rich, I should, were I a youth of quality ten years hence, hesitate between a girl so neglected, and a *negro*.'

"It was indeed astonishing how he *could* remark such minuteness with a sight so miserably imperfect; but no accidental position of a riband escaped him, so nice was his observation, and so rigorous his demands of propriety. When I went with him to Lichfield, and came down stairs to breakfast at the inn, my dress did not please him, and he made me alter it entirely before he would stir a step with us about the town, saying most satirical things concerning the appearance I made in a riding-habit; and adding, 'T is very strange that such eyes as yours cannot discern propriety of dress: if I had a sight only half as good, I think I should see to the centre.'

"Another lady, whose accomplishments he never denied, came to our house one day covered with diamonds, feathers, &c., and he did not seem inclined to chat with her as usual. I asked him why? when the company was gone. 'Why, her head looked so like that of a woman who shows puppets,' said he, 'and her

voice so confirmed the fancy, that I could not bear her to-day ; when she wears a large cap, I can talk to her.'

"When the ladies wore lace trimmings to their clothes, he expressed his contempt of the reigning fashion in these terms : 'A Brussels trimming is like bread-sauce,' said he, 'it takes away the glow of color from the gown, and gives you nothing instead of it ; but sauce was invented to heighten the flavor of our food, and trimming is an ornament to the manteau, or it is nothing. Learn,' said he, 'that there is propriety or impropriety in everything how slight soever, and get at the general principles of dress and of behavior ; if you then transgress them, you will at least know that they are not observed.'"

Madame D'Arblay confirms this account. He had just been finding fault with a bandeau worn by Lady Lade, a very large woman, standing six feet high without her shoes : —

"*Dr. J.* — The truth is, women, take them in general, have no idea of grace. Fashion is all they think of. I don't mean Mrs. Thrale and Miss Burney, when I talk of women ! — they are goddesses ! — and therefore I except them.

"*Mrs. Thrale.* — Lady Lade never wore the bandeau, and said she never would, because it is unbecoming.

"*Dr. J. (laughing).* — Did not she ? then is Lady Lade a charming woman, and I have yet hopes of entering into engagements with her !

"*Mrs. T.* — Well, as to that I can't say ; but to be sure, the only similitude I have yet discovered in you, is in size : there you agree mighty well.

"*Dr. J.* — Why, if anybody could have worn the bandeau, it must have been Lady Lade ; for there is enough of her to carry it off ; but you are too little for anything ridiculous ; that which seems nothing upon a Patagonian, will become very conspicuous upon a Lilliputian, and of you there is so little in all, that one single absurdity would swallow up half of you."

Matrimony was one of his favorite subjects, and he was fond of laying down and refining on the duties of the married state, and the amount of happiness and comfort to be found in it. But once when he was musing over the fire in the drawing-room at Streatham, a young gentleman called to him suddenly, "Mr.

Johnson, would you advise me to marry?" "I would advise no man to marry, Sir," replied the Doctor in a very angry tone, "who is not likely to propagate understanding;" and so left the room. "Our companion," adds Mrs. Thrale, in the "Anecdotes," "looked confounded, and I believe had scarce recovered the consciousness of his own existence, when Johnson came back, and, drawing his chair among us, with altered looks and a softened voice, joined in the general chat, insensibly led the conversation to the subject of marriage, where he laid himself out in a dissertation so useful, so elegant, so founded on the true knowledge of human life, and so adorned with beauty of sentiment, that no one ever recollected the offence, except to rejoice in its consequences."

The young gentleman was Mr. Thrale's nephew, Sir John Lade; who was proposed, half in earnest, whilst still a minor, by the Doctor as a fitting mate for the author of "Evelina." He married a woman of the town, became a celebrated member of the Four-in-Hand Club, and contrived to waste the whole of a fine fortune before he died.

In "Thraliana" she says: "Lady Lade consulted him about her son, Sir John. 'Endeavor, Madam,' said he (Johnson), 'to procure him knowledge; for really ignorance to a rich man is like fat to a sick sheep, it only serves to call the rooks about him.' On the same occasion it was that he observed how a mind unfurnished with subjects and materials for thinking can keep up no dignity at all in solitude. 'It is,' says he, 'in the state of a mill without grist.'"

The attractions of Streatham must have been very strong, to induce Johnson to pass so much of his time away from "the busy hum of men" in Fleet Street, and "the full tide of human existence" at Charing Cross. He often found fault with Mrs. Thrale for living so much in the country, "feeding the chickens till she starved her understanding." Walking in a wood when it rained, she tells us, "was the only rural image he pleased his fancy with; for he would say, after one has gathered the apples in an orchard, one wishes them well baked, and removed to a London eating-house for enjoyment." This is almost as bad as the foreigner, who complained that there was no ripe fruit in England but the

roasted apples. Amongst other modes of passing time in the country, Johnson once or twice tried hunting, and, mounted on an old horse of Mr. Thrale's, acquitted himself to the surprise of the "field," one of whom delighted him by exclaiming, "Why, Johnson rides as well, for aught I see, as the most illiterate fellow in England." But a trial or two satisfied him.

"He thought at heart like courtly Chesterfield,
Who after a long chase o'er hills, dales, fields,
And what not, though he rode beyond all price,
Asked next day, 'If men ever hunted twice?'"

It is very strange, and very melancholy, was his reflection, that the paucity of human pleasures should persuade us ever to call hunting one of them. The mode of locomotion in which he delighted was the vehicular. As he was driving rapidly in a post-chaise with Boswell, he exclaimed, "Life has not many things better than this." On their way from Dr. Taylor's to Derby in 1777, he said, "If I had no duties, and no reference to futurity, I would spend my life in driving briskly in a postchaise with a pretty woman, but she should be one who could understand me, and would add something to the conversation."

Mr. Croker attributes his enjoyment to the novelty of the pleasure; his poverty having in early life prevented him from travelling post. But a better reason is given by Mrs. Thrale:—

"I asked him why he doted on a coach so? and received for answer, that in the first place, the company were shut in with him *there*; and could not escape, as out of a room; in the next place, he heard all that was said in a carriage, where it was my turn to be deaf: and very impatient was he at my occasional difficulty of hearing. On this account he wished to travel all over the world; for the very act of going forward was delightful to him, and he gave himself no concern about accidents, which he said never happened; nor did the running away of the horses on the edge of a precipice between Vernon and St. Denys in France convince him to the contrary: 'for nothing came of it,' he said, 'except that Mr. Thrale leaped out of the carriage into a chalk-pit, and then came up again, looking *as white*!' When the truth was, all their lives were saved by the greatest providence ever

exerted in favor of three human creatures; and the part Mr. Thrale took from desperation was the likeliest thing in the world to produce broken limbs and death."

The drawbacks on his gratification and on that of his fellow-travellers were his physical defects, and his utter insensibility to the beauty of nature, as well as to the fine arts, in so far as they were addressed to the senses of sight and hearing. "He delighted," says Mrs. Thrale, "no more in music than painting; he was almost as deaf as he was blind; travelling with Dr. Johnson was, for these reasons, tiresome enough. Mr. Thrale loved prospects, and was mortified that his friend could not enjoy the sight of those different dispositions of wood and water, hill and valley, that travelling through England and France affords a man. But when he wished to point them out to his companion: 'Never heed such nonsense,' would be the reply: 'a blade of grass is always a blade of grass, whether in one country or another: let us, if we *do* talk, talk about something; men and women are my subjects of inquiry; let us see how these differ from those we have left behind.'"

It is no small deduction from our admiration of Johnson, and no trifling enhancement of his friends' kindness in tolerating his eccentricities, that he seldom made allowance for his own palpable and undeniable deficiencies. As well might a blind man deny the existence of colors, as a purblind man assert that there was no charm in a prospect or in a Claude or Titian, because he could see none. Once, by way of pleasing Reynolds, he pretended to lament that the great painter's genius was not exerted on stuff more durable than canvas, and suggested copper. Sir Joshua urged the difficulty of procuring plates large enough for historical subjects. "What foppish obstacles are these!" exclaimed Johnson. "Here is Thrale has a thousand ton of copper: you may paint it all round if you will, I suppose; it will serve him to brew in afterwards. Will it not, Sir?" (to Thrale who sat by.)

He always "civilized" to Dr. Burney, who has supplied the following anecdote:—

"After having talked slightly of music, he was observed to listen very attentively while Miss Thrale played on the harpsichord; and with eagerness he called to her, 'Why don't you dash

away like Burney?' Dr. Burney upon this said to him, 'I believe, Sir, we shall make a musician of you at last.' Johnson with candid complacency replied, 'Sir, I shall be glad to have a new sense given to me.'

In 1774, the Thrales made a tour in Wales, mainly for the purpose of revisiting her birthplace and estates. They were accompanied by Johnson, who kept a diary of the expedition, beginning July 5th and ending September 24th. It was preserved by his negro servant, and Boswell had no suspicion of its existence, for he says, "I do not find that he kept any journal or notes of what he saw there." The diary was first published by Mr. Duppa in 1816; and some manuscript notes by Mrs. Thrale, which reached that gentleman too late for insertion, have been added in Mr. Murray's recent edition of the Life. The first entry is:—

"*Tuesday, July 5.*—We left Streatham 11 A. M. Price of four horses two shillings a mile. Barnet 1.40 P. M. On the road I read 'Tully's Epistles.' At night at Dunstable." At Chester, he records: "We walked round the walls, which are complete, and contain one mile, three quarters, and one hundred and one yards." Mrs. Thrale's comment is, "Of those *ill-fated* walls Dr. Johnson might have learned the extent from any one. He has since put me fairly out of countenance by saying, 'I have known *my mistress* fifteen years, and never saw her fairly out of humor but on Chester wall;' it was because he would keep Miss Thrale beyond her hour of going to bed to walk on the wall, where, from the want of light, I apprehended some accident to her, — perhaps to him."

He thus describes Mrs. Thrale's family mansion: "*Saturday, July 30.*—We went to Bâch y Graig, where we found an old house, built 1567, in an uncommon and incommodious form.—My mistress chatted about tiring, but I prevailed on her to go to the top.—The floors have been stolen: the windows are stopped.—The house was less than I seemed to expect.—The river Clwyd is a brook with a bridge of one arch, about one third of a mile.—The woods have many trees, generally young; but some which seem to decay.—They have been lopped.—The house

never had a garden. — The addition of another story would make an useful house, but it cannot be great.”

On the 4th August, they visited Rhuddlan Castle and Bodryddan,* of which he says : —

“Stapylton’s house is pretty : there are pleasing shades about it, with a constant spring that supplies a cold bath. We then went out to see a cascade. I trudged unwillingly, and was not sorry to find it dry. The water was, however, turned on, and produced a very striking cataract.”

Mrs. Piozzi remarks on this passage : “He teased Mrs. Cotton about her dry cascade till she was ready to cry.” †

On two occasions, Johnson incidentally imputes a want of liberality to Mrs. Thrale, which the general tenor of her conduct belies : —

“August 2. — We went to Dymorchion Church, where the old clerk acknowledged his mistress. It is the parish church of Bâch y Graig ; a mean fabric ; Mr. Salusbury (Mrs. Thrale’s father was buried in it. The old clerk had great appearance of joy, and foolishly said that he was now willing to die. He had only a crown given him by my mistress.”

“August 4. — Mrs. Thrale lost her purse. She expressed so much uneasiness that I concluded the sum to be very great ; but when I heard of only seven guineas, I was glad to find she had so much sensibility of money.”

Johnson might have remarked, that the annoyance we experience from a loss is seldom entirely regulated by the pecuniary value of the thing lost.

On the way to Holywell he sets down : “Talk with mistress about flattery ;” on which she notes : “He said I flattered the people to whose houses we went : I was saucy and said I was obliged to be civil for two, meaning himself and me. ‡ He re-

* Now the property of Mr. Shipley Conway, the great-grandson of Johnson’s acquaintance, the Bishop of St. Asaph, and representative, through females, of Sir John Conway or Conwy, to whom Rhuddlan Castle, with its domain, was granted by Edward the First.

† Bowles, the poet, on the unexpected arrival of a party to see his grounds, was overheard giving a hurried order to set the fountain playing, and carry the hermit his beard.

‡ Madame D’Arblay reports Mrs. Thrale saying at Streatham in September, 1778 : —

plied, nobody would thank me for compliments they did not understand. At Gwaynynog (Mr. Middleton's) however, *he* was flattered, and was happy, of course."

The other entries referring to the Thrales are:—

"*August 22.*— We went to visit Bodville, the place where Mrs. Thrale was born, and the churches called Tydweilliog and Llangwinodyl, which she holds by impropriation."

"*August 24.*— We went to see Bodville. Mrs. Thrale remembered the rooms, and wandered over them, with recollections of her childhood. This species of pleasure is always melancholy. . . . Mr. Thrale purposes to beautify the churches, and, if he prospers, will probably restore the tithes. Mrs. Thrale visited a house where she had been used to drink milk, which was left, with an estate of £ 200 a year, by one Lloyd, to a married woman who lived with him."

"*August 26.*— *Note.* Queeny's goats, 149, I think."

Without Mr. Duppa's aid this last entry would be a puzzle for commentators. His note is:—

"Mr. Thrale was near-sighted, and could not see the goats browsing on Snowdon, and he promised his daughter, who was a child of ten years old, a penny for every goat she would show him, and Dr. Johnson kept the account; so that it appears her father was in debt to her one hundred and forty-nine pence. *Queeny* was an epithet, which had its origin in the nursery, by which (in allusion to *Queen Esther*) Miss Thrale (whose name was *Esther*) was always distinguished by Johnson."

She was named after her mother, Hester, not Esther.

On September 13, Johnson sets down: "We came to Lord Sandys', at Ombersley, where we were treated with great civility." It was here, as he told Mrs. Thrale, that for the only time in his life he had as much wall fruit as he liked; yet she says that he was in the habit of eating six or seven peaches before breakfast during the fruit season at Streatham. Swift was also fond

"I remember, Sir, when we were travelling in Wales, how you called me to account for my civility to the people; 'Madam,' you said, 'let me have no more of this idle commendation of nothing. Why is it, that whatever you see, and whoever you see, you are to be so indiscriminately lavish of praise?' 'Why I'll tell you, Sir,' said I, 'when I am with you, and Mr. Thrale, and Queeny, I am obliged to be civil for four!'"

of fruit : " observing (says Scott) that a gentleman in whose garden he walked with some friends, seemed to have no intention to request them to eat any, the Dean remarked that it was a saying of his dear grandmother : —

" ' Always pull a peach
When it is within your reach ; ' "

and helping himself accordingly, his example was followed by the whole company."

Thomson, the author of the " Castle of Indolence," was once seen lounging round Lord Burlington's garden, with his hands in his waistcoat pockets, biting off the sunny sides of the peaches.

Johnson's dislike to the Lytteltons was not abated by his visit to Hagley, of which he says, " We made haste away from a place where all were offended." Mrs. Thrale's explanation is : " Mrs. Lyttelton, *ci-devant* Caroline Bristow, forced me to play at whist against my liking, and her husband took away Johnson's candle that he wanted to read by at the other end of the room. Those, I trust, were the offences."

He was not in much better humor at Combermere Abbey, the seat of her relation, Sir Lynch Cotton (grandfather of Lord Combermere), which is beautifully situated on one of the finest lakes in England. He commends the place grudgingly, passes a harsh judgment on Lady Cotton, and is traditionally recorded to have made answer to the baronet who inquired what he thought of a neighboring peer (Lord Kilmorey) : " A dull, commonplace sort of man, just like you and your brother." By way of compensation he has devoted two or three pages of his diary to a bombastic description of his lordship's grounds, which contrasts strangely with the meagre notes of which the rest of it is composed.

In a letter to Levet, dated Lleweny, in Denbighshire, August 16, 1774, printed by Boswell, is this sentence : " Wales, so far as I have yet seen of it, is a very beautiful and rich country, all enclosed and planted." Her marginal note is : " Yet to please Mr. Thrale, he feigned abhorrence of it."

Their impressions of one another as travelling companions

were sufficiently favorable to induce the party (with the addition of Baretti) to make a short tour in France in the autumn of the year following, 1775, during part of which Johnson kept a diary in the same laconic and elliptical style. The only allusion to either of his friends is : —

“We went to Sansterre, a brewer. He brews with about as much malt as Mr. Thrale, and sells his beer at the same price, though he pays no duty for malt, and little more than half as much for beer. Beer is sold retail at sixpence a bottle.”

In a letter to Levet, dated Paris, Oct. 22, 1775, he says : —

“We went to see the king and queen at dinner, and the queen was so impressed by Miss, that she sent one of the gentlemen to inquire who she was. I find all true that you have ever told me at Paris. Mr. Thrale is very liberal, and keeps us two coaches, and a very fine table ; but I think our cookery very bad. Mrs. Thrale got into a convent of English nuns, and I talked with her through the grate, and I am very kindly used by the English Benedictine friars.”

A striking instance of Johnson's occasional impracticability occurred during this journey.

“When we were at Rouen together,” says Mrs. Thrale, “he took a great fancy to the Abbé Roffette, with whom he conversed about the destruction of the order of Jesuits, and condemned it loudly, as a blow to the general power of the Church, and likely to be followed with many and dangerous innovations, which might at length become fatal to religion itself, and shake even the foundation of Christianity. The gentleman seemed to wonder and delight in his conversation : the talk was all in Latin, which both spoke fluently, and Mr. Johnson pronounced a long eulogium upon Milton, with so much ardor, eloquence, and ingenuity, that the Abbé rose from his seat and embraced him. My husband seeing them apparently so charmed with the company of each other, politely invited the Abbé to England, intending to oblige his friend ; who, instead of thanking, reprimanded him severely before the man, for such a sudden burst of tenderness towards a person he could know nothing at all of ; and thus put a sudden finish to all his own and Mr. Thrale's entertainment, from the company of the Abbé Roffette.”

In a letter dated May 9, 1780, also, Mrs. Thrale alludes to more than one disagreement in France : —

“When did I ever plague you about contour, and grace, and expression? I have dreaded them all three since that hapless day at Compiègne, when you teased me so, and Mr. Thrale made what I hoped would have proved a lasting peace; but French ground is unfavorable to fidelity perhaps, and so now you begin again: after having taken five years’ breath, you might have done more than this. Say another word, and I will bring up afresh the history of your exploits at St. Denys and how cross you were for nothing, — but some how or other, our travels never make any part either of our conversation or correspondence.”

Joseph Baretti, who now formed one of the family, is so mixed up with their history that a brief account of him becomes indispensable. He was a Piedmontese, whose position in his native country was not of a kind to tempt him to remain in it, when Lord Charlemont, to whom he had been useful in Italy, proposed his coming to England. His own story was that he had lost at play the little property he had inherited from his father, an architect at Pharo. The education given him by his parents was limited to Latin; he taught himself English, French, Spanish, and Portuguese. His talents, acquirements, and strength of mind must have been considerable, for they soon earned him the esteem and friendship of the most eminent members of the Johnsonian circle, in despite of his arrogance. He came to England in 1753; is kindly mentioned in one of Johnson’s letters in 1754; and when he was in Italy in 1761, his illustrious friend’s letters to him are marked by a tone of affectionate interest. Ceremony and tenderness are oddly blended in the conclusion of one of them : —

“May you, my Baretti, be very happy at Milan, or some other place nearer to, Sir, your most affectionate humble servant, SAMUEL JOHNSON.”

Johnson remarked of Baretti in 1768 : “I know no man who carries his head higher in conversation than Baretti. There are strong powers in his mind. He has not indeed many hooks, but with what hooks he has, he grapples very forcibly.” Madame

D'Arblay was more struck by his rudeness and violence than by his intellectual vigor.*

On Oct. 20, 1769, Baretti was tried at the Old Bailey on a charge of murder, for killing with a pocket knife one of three men who, with a woman of the town, hustled him in the Haymarket.† He was acquitted, and the event is principally memorable for the appearance of Johnson, Burke, Garrick, and Beauclerc as witnesses to character. The substance of Johnson's evidence is thus given in the "Gentleman's Magazine":—

"*Dr. J.* — I believe I began to be acquainted with Mr. Baretti about the year 1753 or 1754. I have been intimate with him. He is a man of literature, a very studious man, a man of great diligence. He gets his living by study. I have no reason to think he was ever disordered with liquor in his life. A man that I never knew to be otherwise than peaceable, and a man that I take to be rather timorous. — *Q.* Was he addicted to pick up women in the streets? — *Dr. J.* I never knew that he was. — *Q.* How is he as to eyesight? — *Dr. J.* He does not see me now, nor do I see him. I do not believe he could be capable of assaulting anybody in the street, without great provocation."

The year after his acquittal Baretti published "Travels through Spain, Portugal, and France;" thus mentioned by Johnson in a letter to Mrs. Thrale, dated Lichfield, July 20, 1770:—

"That Baretti's book would please you all, I made no doubt. I know not whether the world has ever seen such travels before. Those whose lot it is to ramble can seldom write, and those who know how to write can seldom ramble."

The rate of remuneration showed that the world was aware of the value of the acquisition. He gained £500 by this book. His "Frustra Literaria," published some time before in Italy, had also attracted much attention, and, according to Johnson, he was the first who ever received money for copyright in Italy. In a biographical notice of Baretti which appeared in the "Gentleman's Magazine" for May, 1789, written by Dr. Vincent, Dean of

* See "The Diary," Vol. I. p. 421.

† In his defence, he said: "I hope it will be seen that my knife was neither a weapon of offence or defence. I wear it to carve fruit and sweetmeats, and not to kill my fellow-creatures. It is a general custom in France not to put knives on the table, so that even ladies wear them in their pockets for general use."

Westminster, it is stated that it was not distress which compelled him to accept Mr. Thrale's hospitality, but that he was over-persuaded by Johnson, contrary to his own inclination, to undertake the instruction of the Misses Thrale in Italian. "He was either nine or eleven years almost entirely in that family," says the Dean, "though he still rented a lodging in town, during which period he expended his own £500, and received nothing in return for his instruction, but the participation of a good table, and £150 by way of presents. Instead of his letters to Mrs. Piozzi in the 'European Magazine,' had he told this plain, unvarnished tale, he would have convicted that lady of avarice and ingratitude without incurring the danger of a reply, or exposing his memory to be insulted by her advocates."

As he had a pension of £80 a year, besides the interest of his £500, he did not want money. If he had been allowed to want it, the charge of avarice would lie at Mr., not Mrs. Thrale's door; and his memory was exposed to no insult beyond the stigma which (as we shall presently see) his conduct and language necessarily fixed upon it. All his literary friends did not entertain the same high opinion of him. An unpublished letter from Dr. Warton to his brother contains the following passage:—

"He (Huggins, the translator of Ariosto) abuses Baretti infernally, and says that he one day lent Baretti a gold watch, and could never get it afterwards; that after many excuses Baretti skulked, and then got Johnson to write to Mr. Huggins a suppliant letter; that this letter stopped Huggins awhile, while Baretti got a protection from the Sardinian ambassador; and that, at last, with great difficulty, the watch was got from a pawnbroker to whom Baretti had sold it."

This extract is copied from a valuable contribution to the literary annals of the eighteenth century, for which we are indebted to the colonial press.* It is the diary of an Irish clergyman, containing strong internal evidence of authenticity, although nothing more is known of it than that the manuscript was discovered

* Diary of a Visit to England in 1775. By an Irishman (the Rev. Doctor Thomas Campbell, author of "A Philosophical Survey of the South of Ireland"). And other Papers by the same hand. With Notes by Samuel Raymond, M. A., Prothonotary of the Supreme Court of New South Wales. Sydney. Waugh and Cox. 1854.

behind an old press in one of the offices of the Supreme Court of New South Wales. That such a person saw a good deal of Johnson in 1775 is proved by Boswell, whose accuracy is frequently confirmed in return. In one marginal note Mrs. Thrale says : "He was a fine, showy talking man. Johnson liked him of all things in a year or two." In another : "Dr. Campbell was a very tall, handsome man, and, speaking of some other *Hibernian*, used this expression : 'Indeed now, and upon my honor, Sir, I am but a Twitter to him.' " *

Several of his entries throw light on the Thrale establishment : —

"14th. — This day I called at Mr. Thrale's, where I was received with all respect by Mr. and Mrs. Thrale. She is a very learned lady, and joins to the charms of her own sex, the manly understanding of ours. The immensity of the brewery astonished me."

"16th. — Dined with Mr. Thrale along with Dr. Johnson and Baretti. Baretti is a plain, sensible man, who seems to know the world well. He talked to me of the invitation given him by the College of Dublin, but said it (£100 a year and rooms) was not worth his acceptance; and if it had been, he said, in point of profit, still he would not have accepted it, for that now he could not live out of London. He had returned a few years ago to his own country, but he could not enjoy it; and he was obliged to return to London, to those connections he had been making for near thirty years past. He told me he had several families with whom, both in town and country, he could go at any time and spend a month: he is at this time on these terms at Mr. Thrale's, and he knows how to keep his ground. Talking as we were at tea of the magnitude of the beer vessels, he said there was one thing in Mr. Thrale's house still more extraordinary; — meaning his wife. She gulped the pill very prettily, — so much for Baretti! Johnson, you are the very man Lord Chesterfield describes: a Hottentot indeed, and though your abilities are respectable, you never can be respected yourself. He has the aspect of an idiot, without the faintest ray of sense gleaming from any one feature, — with the most awkward garb, and unpowdered

* He is similarly described in the "Letters," Vol. I. p. 329.

gray wig, on one side only of his head, — he is forever dancing the devil's jig, and sometimes he makes the most drivelling effort to whistle some thought in his absent paroxysms."

"25th. — Dined at Mr. Thrale's, where there were ten or more gentlemen, and but one lady besides Mrs. Thrale. The dinner was excellent: first course, soups at head and foot, removed by fish and a saddle of mutton; second course, a fowl they call galena at head, and a capon larger than some of our Irish turkeys, at foot; third course, four different sorts of ices, pine-apple, grape, raspberry, and a fourth; in each remove there were I think fourteen dishes. The two first courses were served in massy plate. I sat beside Baretti, which was to me the richest part of the entertainment. He and Mr. and Mrs. Thrale joined in expressing to me Dr. Johnson's concern that he could not give me the meeting that day, but desired that I should go and see him."

"April 1st. — Dined at Mr. Thrale's, whom in proof of the magnitude of London, I cannot help remarking, no coachman, and this is the third I have called, could find without inquiry. But of this by the way. There was Murphy, Boswell, and Baretti: the two last, as I learned just before I entered, are mortal foes, so much so that Murphy and Mrs. Thrale agreed that Boswell expressed a desire that Baretti should be hanged upon that unfortunate affair of his killing, &c. Upon this hint, I went, and without any sagacity, it was easily discernible, for upon Baretti's entering Boswell did not rise, and upon Baretti's descry of Boswell he grinned a perturbed glance. Politeness, however, smooths the most hostile brows, and theirs were smoothed. Johnson was the subject, both before and after dinner, for it was the boast of all but myself, that under that roof were the Doctor's fast friends. His *bon-mots* were retailed in such plenty, that they, like a surfeit, could not lie upon my memory."

"N. B. The 'Tour to the Western Isles' was written in twenty days, and the 'Patriot' in three; 'Taxation no Tyranny,' within a week; and not one of them would have yet seen the light, had it not been for Mrs. Thrale and Baretti, who stirred him up by laying wagers."

"*April 8th.* — Dined with Thrale, where Dr. Johnson was, and Boswell (and Baretti as usual). The Doctor was not in as good spirits as he was at Dilly's. He had supped the night before with Lady —, Miss Jeffries, one of the maids of honor, Sir Joshua Reynolds, &c., at Mrs. Abington's. He said Sir C. Thompson, and some others who were there, spoke like people who had seen good company, and so did Mrs. Abington herself, who could not have seen good company."

Boswell's note, alluding to the same topic, is : —

"On Saturday, April 8, I dined with him at Mr. Thrale's, where we met the Irish Dr. Campbell. Johnson had supped the night before at Mrs. Abington's with some fashionable people whom he named; and he seemed much pleased with having made one in so elegant a circle. Nor did he omit to pique his *mistress* a little with jealousy of her housewifery; for he said, with a smile, 'Mrs. Abington's jelly, my dear lady, was better than yours.'"

The monotony of a constant residence at Streatham was varied by trips to Bath or Brighton; and it was so much a matter of course for Johnson to make one of the party, that when, not expecting him so soon back from a journey with Boswell, the Thrale family and Baretti started for Bath without him, Boswell is disposed to treat their departure without the lexicographer as a slight to him.

In his first letter of condolence on Mr. Thrale's death, Johnson speaks of her having enjoyed happiness in marriage, "to a degree of which, without personal knowledge, I should have thought the description fabulous." The "*Autobiography*" tells a widely different tale. The mortification of not finding herself appreciated by her husband was poignantly increased, during the last years of his life, by finding another offensively preferred to her. He was so fascinated by one of her fair friends, as to lose sight altogether of what was due to appearances or to the feelings of his wife. The story she told the author of "*Piozziana*," in proof of Johnson's want of firmness, clearly refers to this lady : —

"I had remarked to her that Johnson's readiness to condemn any moral deviation in others was, in a man so entirely before the public as he was, nearly a proof of his own spotless purity

of conduct. She said, 'Yes, Johnson was, on the whole, a rigid moralist; but he could be ductile, I may say, servile; and I will give you an instance. We had a large dinner-party at our house; Johnson sat on one side of me, and Burke on the other; and in the company there was a young female (Mrs. Piozzi named her),* to whom I, in my peevishness, thought Mr. Thrale superfluously attentive, to the neglect of me and others; especially of myself, then near my confinement, and dismally low spirited; notwithstanding which, Mr. T. very unceremoniously begged of me to change place with Sophy —, who was threatened with a sore throat, and might be injured by sitting near the door. I had scarcely swallowed a spoonful of soup when this occurred, and was so overset by the coarseness of the proposal, that I burst into tears, said something petulant, — that perhaps ere long the lady might be at the head of Mr. T.'s table, without displacing the mistress of the house, &c., and so left the apartment. I retired to the drawing-room, and for an hour or two contended with my vexation, as I best could, when Johnson and Burke came up. On seeing them, I resolved to give a *jobation* to both, but fixed on Johnson for my charge, and asked him if he had noticed what passed, what I had suffered, and whether, allowing for the state of my nerves, I was much to blame?' He answered, 'Why, possibly not; your feelings were outraged.' I said, 'Yes, greatly so; and I cannot help remarking with what blandness and composure you *witnessed* the outrage. Had this transaction been told of others, your anger would have known no bounds; but, towards a man who gives good dinners, &c., you were meekness itself!' Johnson colored, and Burke, I thought, looked foolish; but I had not a word of answer from either."

The only excuse for Mr. Thrale is to be found in his mental and bodily condition at the time. This made it impossible for Johnson or Burke to interfere without a downright quarrel with him, nor without making matters worse. Highly to her credit, she did not omit any part of her own duties because he forgot his. In March, 1781, a few weeks before his death, she writes to Johnson: —

* Sophia Streatfield, the charming S.S., as Thrale and Johnson called her, and the lady of the ivory neck, &c. (*ante*, p. 33). There is a good deal about her in the "Autobiography."

"I am willing to show myself in Southwark, or in any place, for my master's pleasure or advantage ; but have no present conviction that to be re-elected would be advantageous, so shattered a state as his nerves are in just now. — Do not you, however, fancy for a moment, that I shrink from fatigue, — or desire to escape from doing my duty ; — spiting one's antagonist is a reason that never ought to operate, and never does operate with me : I care nothing about a rival candidate's innuendos, I care only about my husband's health and fame ; and if we find that he earnestly wishes to be once more member for the Borough, — he *shall* be member, if anything done or suffered by me will help make him so."

Referring to the spring of 1781, "I found," says Boswell, "on visiting Mr. Thrale that he was now very ill, and had removed, I suppose by the solicitation of Mrs. Thrale, to a house in Grosvenor Square." She has written opposite : "Spiteful again ! He went by direction of his physicians where they could easiest attend to him." On February 7, 1781, she writes to Madame D'Arblay : —

"Yesterday I had a conversazione. Mrs. Montagu was brilliant in diamonds, solid in judgment, critical in talk. Sophy smiled, Piozzi sung, Pepys panted with admiration, Johnson was good-humored, Lord John Clinton attentive, Dr. Bowdler lame, and my master not asleep. Mrs. Ord looked elegant, Lady Rothes dainty, Mrs. Davenant dapper, and Sir Philip's curls were all blown about by the wind. Mrs. Byron rejoices that her Admiral and I agree so well ; the way to his heart is connoisseurship it seems, and for a background and cortorno, who comes up to Mrs. Thrale, you know."

We learn from Madame D'Arblay's Journal, that, towards the end of March, 1781, Mr. Thrale had resolved on going abroad with his wife, and that Johnson was to accompany them, but a subsequent entry states that the doctors condemned the plan ; and "therefore," she adds, "it is settled that a great meeting of his friends is to take place before he actually prepares for the journey, and they are to encircle him in a body, and endeavor, by representations and entreaties, to prevail with him to give it up ; and I have little doubt myself but, amongst us, we shall be

able to succeed." This is one of the oddest schemes ever projected by a set of eminently learned and accomplished gentlemen and ladies for the benefit of a hypochondriac patient. Its execution was prevented by his death April 4th, 1781. The hurried note from Mrs. Thrale announcing the event, beginning, "Write to me, pray for me," is indorsed by Madame D'Arblay: "Written a few hours after the death of Mr. Thrale, which happened by a sudden stroke of apoplexy, on the morning of a day on which half the fashion of London had been invited to an intended assembly at his house in Grosvenor Square." These invitations had been sent out by his own express desire: so little was he aware of his danger. Letters and messages of condolence poured in from all sides. Johnson says all that can be said in the way of counsel or consolation: —

"I do not exhort you to reason yourself into tranquillity. We must first pray, and then labor; first implore the blessing of God, and those means which he puts into our hands. Cultivated ground has few weeds; a mind occupied by lawful business, has little room for useless regret.

"We read the will to-day; but I will not fill my first letter with any other account than that, with all my zeal for your advantage, I am satisfied; and that the other executors, more used to consider property than I, commended it for wisdom and equity. Yet why should I not tell you that you have five hundred pounds for your immediate expenses, and two thousand pounds a year, with both the houses and all the goods?

"Let us pray for one another, that the time, whether long or short, that shall yet be granted us, may be well spent; and that when this life, which at the longest is very short, shall come to an end, a better may begin which shall never end."

On April 9th he writes: —

"DEAREST MADAM, — That you are gradually recovering your tranquillity, is the effect to be humbly expected from trust in God. Do not represent life as darker than it is. Your loss has been very great, but you retain more than almost any other can hope to possess. You are high in the opinion of mankind; you have children from whom much pleasure may be expected; and that you will find many friends, you have no reason to doubt.

Of my friendship, be it worth more or less, I hope you think yourself certain, without much art or care. It will not be easy for me to repay the benefits that I have received ; but I hope to be always ready at your call. Our sorrow has different effects ; you are withdrawn into solitude, and I am driven into company. I am afraid of thinking what I have lost. I never had such a friend before. Let me have your prayers and those of my dear Queeny.

“The prudence and resolution of your design to return so soon to your business and your duty deserves great praise ; I shall communicate it on Wednesday to the other executors. Be pleased to let me know whether you would have me come to Streatham to receive you, or stay here till the next day.”

Johnson was one of the executors, and took pride in discharging his share of the trust. Mrs. Thrale’s account (in the “Autobiography”) of the pleasure he took in signing the checks, is incidentally confirmed by Boswell : —

“I could not but be somewhat diverted by hearing Johnson talk in a pompous manner of his new office, and particularly of the concerns of the brewery, which it was at last resolved should be sold. Lord Lucan tells a very good story, which, if not precisely exact, is certainly characteristical ; that when the sale of Thrale’s brewery was going forward, Johnson appeared bustling about, with an ink-horn and pen in his button-hole, like an excise-man ; and on being asked what he really considered to be the value of the property which was to be disposed of, answered, ‘We are not here to sell a parcel of boilers and vats, but the potentiality of growing rich beyond the dreams of avarice.’”

The executors had legacies of £200 each ; Johnson, to the surprise of his friends, being placed on no better footing than the rest. Many and heavy as were the reproaches subsequently heaped upon the widow, no one accused her of being in any respect wanting in energy, propriety, or self-respect at this period. She took the necessary steps for promoting her own interests and those of her children with prudence and promptitude. Madame D’Arblay, who was carrying on a flirtation with one of the executors (Mr. Crutchley), and had personal motives for watching their proceedings, writes, April 29th : —

"Miss Thrale is steady and constant, and very sincerely grieved for her father.

"The four executors, Mr. Cator, Mr. Crutchley, Mr. Henry Smith, and Dr. Johnson, have all behaved generously and honorably, and seem determined to give Mrs. Thrale all the comfort and assistance in their power. She is to carry on the business jointly with them. Poor soul! it is a dreadful toil and worry to her."

"*Streatham, Thursday.* — This was the great and most important day to all this house, upon which the sale of the brewery was to be decided. Mrs. Thrale went early to town, to meet all the executors, and Mr. Barclay, the Quaker, who was the *bidder*. She was in great agitation of mind, and told me if all went well she would wave a white pocket-handkerchief out of the coach window.

"Four o'clock came and dinner was ready, and no Mrs. Thrale. Five o'clock followed, and no Mrs. Thrale. Queeny and I went out upon the lawn, where we sauntered, in eager expectation, till near six, and then the coach appeared in sight, and a white pocket-handkerchief was waved from it. I ran to the door of it to meet her, and she jumped out of it, and gave me a thousand embraces while I gave my congratulations. We went instantly to her dressing-room, where she told me, in brief, how the matter had been transacted, and then we went down to dinner. Dr. Johnson and Mr. Crutchley had accompanied her home."

The event is thus announced to Langton by Johnson, in a letter printed by Boswell, dated June 16, 1781: "You will perhaps be glad to hear that Mrs. Thrale is disencumbered of her brewhouse, and that it seemed to the purchaser so far from an evil that he was content to give for it £135,000. Is the nation ruined?" *Marginal note*: "I suppose he was neither glad nor sorry."

The brewery was purchased by Messrs. Barclay, Perkins, and Co. The house at Streatham was left to Mrs. Thrale for her life, but in the course of the following year she made up her mind to let it; and there was no foundation for the remark with which Boswell accompanies his account of Johnson's solemn farewell to Streatham: —

"Whether," he says, "her attachment to him was already divided by another object, I am unable to ascertain; but it is plain that Johnson's penetration was alive to her neglect or forced attention; for on the 6th October this year, 1782, we find him making a 'parting use of the library' at Streatham, and pronouncing a prayer which he composed on leaving Mrs. Thrale's family."

In one of his memorandum books Johnson wrote: "Sunday, went to church at Streatham, *Templo valedixi cum osculo*" (I bade farewell to the temple with a kiss); and in the same book is a Latin entry, particularizing his last dinner at Streatham, and ending "*Streathamiam quando revisam?*" (when shall I revisit Streatham?)*

Madame D'Arblay's Diary proves that, far from having left Mrs. Thrale's family, he was living with them at Brighton on the 26th of the same month, having come with them from Streatham, and on October 28th she writes:—

"At dinner, we had Dr. Delap and Mr. Selwyn, who accompanied us in the evening to a ball; as did also Dr. Johnson, to the universal amazement of all who saw him there;—but he said he had found it so dull being quite alone the preceding evening, that he determined upon going with us; 'for,' he said, 'it cannot be worse than being alone.' Strange that he should think so! I am sure I am not of his mind."

On the 29th, she records that Johnson behaved very rudely to Mr. Pepys, and fairly drove him from the house. The entry for November 10th is remarkable: "We spent this evening at Lady De Ferrars, where Dr. Johnson accompanied us, for the first time he has been invited of our parties since my arrival." On the 20th November, she tells us that Mrs. and the three Miss

* Mr. Croker terms this entry his farewell to the kitchen. It runs thus:—

"Oct. 6. Die Dominica, 1782.

"Pransus sum Streathamiae agninum crus coctum cum herbis (spinach) minutis, farcimen farinaceum cum uvis passis, lumbos bovillos, et pullum gallinae Turcicae; et post carnes missas, ficus, uvas, non admodum maturas, ita voluit anni intemperies, cum malis Persicis, iis tamen duris. Non lætus accubui, cibum modicè sumpsi, ne intemperantiâ ad extremum peccaretur. Si recte memini, in mentem venerunt epulæ in exequiis Hadoni celebratæ. Streathamiam quando revisam?" — *Rose MSS.*

Thrales and herself got up early to bathe. "We then returned home, and dressed by candle-light, and, as soon as we could get Dr. Johnson ready, we set out upon our journey in a coach and a chaise, and arrived in Argyll Street at dinner time. Mrs. Thrale has there fixed her tent for this short winter, which will end with the beginning of April, when her foreign journey takes place."

On Boswell's arrival in London, the year following (March 20, 1783) he found Johnson still domesticated with Mrs. Thrale and her daughters in Argyll Street, and judging from their manner to each other, "imagined all to be as well as formerly." But three months afterwards (June 19th) Johnson writes to her: —

"I am sitting down in no cheerful solitude to write a narrative which would once have affected you with tenderness and sorrow, but which you will perhaps pass over now with the careless glance of frigid indifference. For this diminution of regard, however, I know not whether I ought to blame you, who may have reasons which I cannot know, and I do not blame myself, who have for a great part of human life done you what good I could, and have never done you evil."

Two days before, he had suffered a paralytic stroke, and lost the power of speech for a period. After minutely detailing his ailments and their treatment by his medical advisers, he proceeds: —

"How this will be received by you I know not. I hope you will sympathize with me; but perhaps

"My mistress gracious, mild, and good,
Cries! Is he dumb? 'Tis time he should.

"But can this be possible? I hope it cannot. I hope that what, when I could speak, I spoke of you, and to you, will be in a sober and serious hour remembered by you; and surely it cannot be remembered but with some degree of kindness. I have loved you with virtuous affection; I have honored you with sincere esteem. Let not all our endearments be forgotten, but let me have in this great distress your pity and your prayers. You see I yet turn to you with my complaints as a settled and unalienable friend; do not, do not drive me from you, for I have not deserved either neglect or hatred."

Mrs. Thrale was at Bath, and did all she could to comfort him. Whilst his illness lasted, he sent her a regular diary, and on June 28th he sets down in it: "Your letter is just such as I desire, and as from you I hope always to deserve." He was so absorbed with his own sufferings, as to make no allowance for hers. Yet her own health was in a very precarious state, and in the autumn of the same year, his complaints of silence and neglect are suspended by the intelligence that her daughter Sophia was lying at death's door. On March 27, 1784, she writes: —

"You tell one of my daughters that you know not with distinctness the cause of my complaints. I believe she who lives with me knows them no better; one very dreadful one is however removed by dear Sophia's recovery. It is kind in you to quarrel no more about expressions which were not meant to offend; but unjust to suppose, I have not lately thought myself dying. Let us, however, take the Prince of Abyssinia's advice, *and not add to the other evils of life the bitterness of controversy.* If courage is a noble and generous quality, let us exert it to the last, and *at the last*: if faith is a Christian virtue, let us willingly receive and accept that support it will most surely bestow, — and do permit me to repeat those words with which I know not why you were displeased: *Let us leave behind us the best example that we can.*

"All this is not written by a person in high health and happiness, but by a fellow-sufferer, who has more to endure than she can tell, or you can guess; and now let us talk of the Severn salmons, which will be coming in soon; I shall send you one of the finest, and shall be glad to hear that your appetite is good."

The pleasures of intimacy in friendship depend far more on external circumstances than people of a sentimental turn of mind are willing to concede; and when constant companionship ceases to suit the convenience of both parties, the chances are that it will be dropped on the first favorable opportunity. Admiration, esteem, or affection may continue to be felt for one whom, from altered habits or new ties, we can no longer receive as an inmate or an established member of the family circle. It is to be regretted, therefore, that Mrs. Thrale should have rested her

partial estrangement from Johnson upon grounds which would justify a suspicion that much of the cordiality she had shown him during the palmy days of their friendship had been forced. In her "Anecdotes," after mentioning an instance of his violence, she says :—

"Such accidents, however, occurred too often, and I was forced to take advantage of my lost lawsuit, and plead inability of purse to remain longer in London or its vicinage. I had been crossed in my intentions of going abroad, and found it convenient, for every reason of health, peace, and pecuniary circumstances, to retire to Bath, where I knew Mr. Johnson would not follow me, and where I could for that reason command some little portion of time for my own use ; a thing impossible while I remained at Streatham or at London, as my hours, carriage, and servants had long been at his command who would not rise in the morning till twelve o'clock perhaps, and oblige me to make breakfast for him till the bell rung for dinner, though much displeased if the toilet was neglected, and though much of the time we passed together was spent in blaming or deriding, very justly, my neglect of economy, and waste of that money which might make many families happy. The original reason of our connection, his *particularly disordered health and spirits*, had been long at an end, and he had no other ailments than old age and general infirmity, which every professor of medicine was ardently zealous and generally attentive to palliate, and to contribute all in their power for the prolongation of a life so valuable. Veneration for his virtue, reverence for his talents, delight in his conversation, and habitual endurance of a yoke my husband first put upon me, and of which he contentedly bore his share for sixteen or seventeen years, made me go on so long with Mr. Johnson ; but the perpetual confinement I will own to have been terrifying in the first years of our friendship, and irksome in the last ; nor could I pretend to support it without help, when my coadjutor was no more. To the assistance we gave him, the shelter our house afforded to his uneasy fancies, and to the pains we took to soothe or repress them, the world perhaps is indebted for the three political pamphlets, the new edition and correction of his Dictionary, and for the Poets' Lives, which he would scarce have

lived, I think, and kept his faculties entire, to have written, had not incessant care been exerted at the time of his first coming to be our constant guest in the country ; and several times after that, when he found himself particularly oppressed with diseases incident to the most vivid and fervent imaginations. I shall forever consider it as the greatest honor which could be conferred on any one, to have been the confidential friend of Dr. Johnson's health, and to have in some measure, with Mr. Thrale's assistance, saved from distress at least, if not from worse, a mind great beyond the comprehension of common mortals, and good beyond all hope of imitation from perishable beings."

This, in forensic phrase, is her case.

That the resolution to live more apart from her venerated friend would have been taken independently of Piozzi, is likely enough ; but she had little reason to wonder or complain that it was attributed to her growing affection for her future husband. Her account of the commencement of their acquaintance, and the growth of their attachment, forms one of the most striking fragments of her Autobiography. She says that in August, 1780, Madame D'Arblay recommended him by letter as "a man likely to lighten the burden of life to her," and that both she and Mr. Thrale took to him at once. Madame D'Arblay is silent on the subject of the introduction or recommendation. She told the Rev. W. Harness, who told me, that the first time Mrs. Thrale was in a room with Piozzi, she stood behind him when he was singing, and mimicked his gestures. On August 24, 1780, Madame D'Arblay writes: "I have not seen Piozzi ; he left me your letter, which indeed is a charming one, though its contents puzzled me much whether to make me sad or merry." In her Diary, dated Streatham, July 16, 1781, she sets down :—

"You will believe I was not a little surprised to see Sacchini. He is going to the Continent with Piozzi, and Mrs. Thrale invited them both to spend the last day at Streatham, and from hence proceeded to Margate."

"The first song he sang, beginning 'En quel amabil volto,' you may perhaps know, but I did not ; it is a charming mezza bravura. He and Piozzi then sung together the duet of the 'Amore Soldato ;' and nothing could be much more delightful ;

Piozzi taking pains to sing his very best, and Sacchini, with his soft but delicious whisper, almost thrilling me by his exquisite and pathetic expression. They then went through that opera, great part of 'Creso,' some of 'Erifile,' and much of 'Rinaldo.'

In February, 1782, Piozzi is thus mentioned in a letter from Mrs. Thrale to Madame D'Arblay: "This morning I was with him (Johnson) again, and this evening Mrs. Ord's conversation and Piozzi's *cara voce* have kept away care pretty well." It was never asserted or insinuated by her bitterest enemies that her regard for him took too warm a tinge whilst Thrale lived, and it appears to have ripened slowly into love, manifesting no symptoms calculated to excite suspicion till the year before the crisis. Piozzi's attentions to the wealthy widow had attracted Johnson's notice without troubling his peace. On November 24th, 1781, he wrote from Ashbourne: "Piozzi, I find, is coming in spite of Miss Harriet's prediction, or second sight, and when *he* comes and *I* come, you will have two about you that love you; and I question if either of us heartily care how few more you have. But how many soever they may be, I hope you keep your kindness for me, and I have a great mind to have Queeny's kindness too."

Again, December 3d, 1781: "You have got Piozzi again, notwithstanding pretty Harriet's dire denunciations. The Italian translation which he has brought, you will find no great accession to your library, for the writer seems to understand very little English. When we meet we can compare some passages. Pray contrive a multitude of good things for us to do when we meet. Something that may *hold all together*; though if anything makes *me* love you more, it is going from you."

Madame D'Arblay, who registers her friend's movements as carefully and minutely as her own, states in August, 1782, that Streatham had been let to Lord Shelburne, and that "My dear Mrs. Thrale, the friend, though not the *most* dear friend, of my heart, is going abroad for three years certain. This scheme has been some time in a sort of distant agitation, but it is now brought to a resolution. Much private business belongs to it relative to her detestable lawsuit; but much private inclination is also joined with it relative to her long wishing to see Italy."

This scheme of visiting Italy was abandoned, and the friends continued living on the usual terms; Mrs. Thrale's time, as we learn from the Diary, being divided between Argyll Street, Brighton, and Bath. In the mean time, Piozzi's suit had been successfully prosecuted, and her growing inclination for him, although she resisted it with might and main, at length got the better of pride and prudence, and in the spring of 1783 she had entered into a formal engagement to become his wife. The repugnance of her daughters to the match was reasonable and intelligible; but to appreciate the tone taken by her friends, we must bear in mind the social position of Italian singers and musical performers at the period. "Amusing vagabonds" are the epithets by which Lord Byron designates Catalani and Naldi, in 1809;* and such is the light in which they were undoubtedly regarded in 1783. Mario would have been treated with the same indiscriminating illiberality as Piozzi. The newspapers took up the subject, and rang the changes on the amorous disposition of the widow and the adroit cupidity of the fortune-hunter. So pelting and pitiless was the storm of taunts and reproaches, and so urgent were the remonstrances, that a temporary reaction was effected: her promise was withdrawn; her letters were returned; and Piozzi was persuaded to leave the country. But the sustained effort imposed upon her was beyond her strength: her health gave way under the resulting conflict of emotions; and her daughters reluctantly connived at his recall by her physician as a measure on which her life depended. She was married to him on the 25th of July, 1784.

* "Well may the nobles of our present race
Watch each distortion of a Naldi's face;
Well may they smile on Italy's buffoons,
And worship Catalani's pantaloons."

"Naldi and Catalani require little notice; for the visage of the one and the salary of the other will enable us long to recollect these amusing vagabonds." — *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*. Artists in general, and men of letters by profession, did not rank much higher in the fine world. (See Miss Berry's "England and France," Vol. II. p. 42.) Iffland, the German dramatist, had a *liaison* with a Prussian woman of rank. On her husband's death he proposed marriage, and was indignantly refused. The lady was conscious of no degradation from being his mistress, but would have forfeited both caste and self-respect by becoming his wife.

Madame D'Arblay has recorded what took place between Mrs. Piozzi and herself on the occasion :—

Miss F. Burney to Mrs. Piozzi.

“Norbury Park, Aug. 10, 1784.

“When my wondering eyes first looked over the letter I received last night, my mind instantly dictated a high-spirited vindication of the consistency, integrity, and faithfulness of the friendship thus abruptly reproached and cast away. But a sleepless night gave me leisure to recollect that you were ever as generous as precipitate, and that your own heart would do justice to mine, in the cooler judgment of future reflection. Committing myself, therefore, to that period, I determined simply to assure you, that if my last letter hurt either you or Mr. Piozzi, I am no less sorry than surprised; and that if it offended you, I sincerely beg your pardon.

“Not to that time, however, can I wait to acknowledge the pain an accusation so unexpected has caused me, nor the heartfelt satisfaction with which I shall receive, when you are able to write it, a softer renewal of regard.

“May Heaven direct and bless you!

“F. B.

“N. B. This is the sketch of the answer which F. B. most painfully wrote to the unmerited reproach of not sending *cordial congratulations* upon a marriage which she had uniformly, openly, and with deep and avowed affliction, thought wrong.

“Mrs. Piozzi to Miss Burney.

“Wellbeck Street, No. 33 Cavendish Square.

“Friday, Aug. 13, 1784.

“Give yourself no serious concern, sweetest Burney. All is well, and I am too happy myself to make a friend otherwise; quiet your kind heart immediately, and love my husband if you love his and your

“H. L. PIOZZI.

"N. B. To this kind note, F. B. wrote the warmest and most affectionate and heartfelt reply ; but never received another word ! And here and thus stopped a correspondence of six years of almost unequalled partiality and fondness on her side, and affection, gratitude, admiration, and sincerity on that of F. B., who could only conjecture the cessation to be caused by the resentment of Piozzi, when informed of her constant opposition to the union."

Of the six letters which passed between Johnson and Mrs. Piozzi on the same subject, only two (Nos. 1 and 5) have hitherto been made public ; and the incompleteness of the correspondence has caused the most embarrassing confusion in the minds of biographers and editors, too prone to act on the maxim, that, wherever female reputation is concerned, we should hope for the best and believe the worst. Hawkins, apparently ignorant that she had written to Johnson to announce her intention, says, "He was made uneasy by a report" which induced him to write a strong letter of remonstrance, of which what he calls an *adumbration* was published in the "Gentleman's Magazine" for December, 1784. Mr. Croker, avoiding a similar error, says : "In the lady's own (part) publication of the correspondence, this letter (No. 1) is given as from Mrs. Piozzi, and is signed with the initial of her name : Dr. Johnson's answer is also addressed to Mrs. Piozzi, and both the letters allude to the matter as *done* ; yet it appears, by the periodical publications of the day, that the marriage did not take place until the 25th July. The editor knew not how to account for this but by supposing that Mrs. Piozzi, to avoid Johnson's importunity, had stated that as *done* which was only *settled to be done*."

The matter is made plain by the circular (No. 2), which states that "Piozzi is coming back from Italy." He arrived on July 2d, after a fifteen months' absence, which proved both his loyalty and the sincerity of the struggle in her own heart and mind. There is no signature to her first autograph letter, and both Dr. Johnson's autograph letters are addressed to *Mrs. Thrale*. But she has occasioned the mistake into which so many have fallen, by her mode of heading these when she printed the two-volume edition of "Letters" in 1788. By the kindness of Mr. Salus-

bury I am now enabled to print the whole correspondence, with the exception of her last letter, which she describes.

No. 1.

Mrs. Piozzi to Dr. Johnson.

“ Bath, June 30.

“ MY DEAR SIR, — The enclosed is a circular letter which I have sent to all the guardians, but our friendship demands somewhat more ; it requires that it should beg your pardon for concealing from you a connection which you must have heard of by many, but I suppose never believed. Indeed, my dear Sir, it was concealed only to save us both needless pain ; I could not have borne to reject that counsel it would have killed me to take, and I only tell it you now because all is irrevocably settled and out of your power to prevent. I will say, however, that the dread of your disapprobation has given me some anxious moments, and though perhaps I am become by many privations the most independent woman in the world, I feel as if acting without a parent’s consent till you write kindly to

“ Your faithful servant.”

No. 2. *Circular.*

“ SIR, — As one of the executors of Mr. Thrale’s will and guardian to his daughters, I think it my duty to acquaint you that the three eldest left Bath last Friday for their own house at Brighthelmstone in company with an amiable friend, Miss Nicholson, who has sometimes resided with us here, and in whose society they may, I think, find some advantages, and certainly no disgrace. I waited on them to Salisbury, Wilton, &c., and offered to attend them to the seaside myself, but they preferred this lady’s company to mine, having heard that Mr. Piozzi is coming back from Italy, and judging perhaps by our past friendship and continued correspondence that his return would be succeeded by our marriage.

“ I have the honor to be, Sir, your obedient servant.

“ Bath, June 30, 1784.”

No. 3.

"MADAM, — If I interpret your letter right, you are ignominiously married: if it is yet undone, let us *once more talk* * together. If you have abandoned your children and your religion, God forgive your wickedness; if you have forfeited your fame and your country, may your folly do no further mischief. If the last act is yet to do, I who have loved you, esteemed you, revered you, and *served you*,* I who long thought you the first of womankind, entreat that, before your fate is irrevocable, I may once more see you. I was, I once was, Madam, most truly yours,

"SAM. JOHNSON.

"July 2, 1784.

"I will come down if you permit it."

No. 4.

"July 4, 1784.

"SIR, — I have this morning received from you so rough a letter in reply to one which was both tenderly and respectfully written, that I am forced to desire the conclusion of a correspondence which I can bear to continue no longer. The birth of my second husband is not meaner than that of my first; his sentiments are not meaner; his profession is not meaner, and his superiority in what he professes acknowledged by all mankind. It is want of fortune, then, that is ignominious; the character of the man I have chosen has no other claim to such an epithet. The religion to which he has been always a zealous adherent will, I hope, teach him to forgive insults he has not deserved; mine will, I hope, enable me to bear them at once with dignity and patience. To hear that I have forfeited my fame is indeed the greatest insult I ever yet received. My fame is as unsullied as snow, or I should think it unworthy of him who must henceforth protect it.

"I write by the coach the more speedily and effectually to prevent your coming hither. Perhaps by my fame (and I hope it is so) you mean only that celebrity which is a consideration of

* The four words which I have printed in italics are indistinctly written, and cannot be satisfactorily made out.

a much lower kind. I care for that only as it may give pleasure to my husband and his friends.

"Farewell, dear Sir, and accept my best wishes. You have always commanded my esteem, and long enjoyed the fruits of a friendship never infringed by one harsh expression on my part during twenty years of familiar talk. Never did I oppose your will, or control your wish; nor can your unmerited severity itself lessen my regard; but till you have changed your opinion of Mr. Piozzi, let us converse no more. God bless you."

No. 5.

To Mrs. Piozzi.

"London, July 8, 1784.

"DEAR MADAM, — What you have done, however I may lament it, I have no pretence to resent, as it has not been injurious to me: I therefore breathe out one sigh more of tenderness, perhaps useless, but at least sincere.

"I wish that God may grant you every blessing, that you may be happy in this world for its short continuance, and eternally happy in a better state; and whatever I can contribute to your happiness I am very ready to repay, for that kindness which soothed twenty years of a life radically wretched.

"Do not think slightly of the advice which I now presume to offer. Prevail upon Mr. Piozzi to settle in England: you may live here with more dignity than in Italy, and with more security; your rank will be higher, and your fortune more under your own eye. I desire not to detail all my reasons, but every argument of prudence and interest is for England, and only some phantoms of imagination seduce you to Italy.

"I am afraid, however, that my counsel is vain, yet I have eased my heart by giving it.

"When Queen Mary took the resolution of sheltering herself in England, the Archbishop of St. Andrew's, attempting to dissuade her, attended on her journey; and when they came to the irremeable stream* that separated the two kingdoms, walked by

* Queen Mary left the Scottish for the English coast, on the Firth of Solway

her side into the water, in the middle of which he seized her bridle, and with earnestness proportioned to her danger and his own affection pressed her to return. The Queen went forward. — If the parallel reaches thus far, may it go no further. — The tears stand in my eyes.

"I am going into Derbyshire, and hope to be followed by your good wishes, for I am, with great affection,

"Your, &c.

"Any letters that come for me hither will be sent me."

In a memorandum on this letter, she says: "I wrote him a very kind and affectionate farewell." Miss Hawkins says: "It was I who discovered the letter (No. 4). I carried it to my father, he enclosed it and sent it to her, there never having been any intercourse between them." * Hawkins states that a letter from Johnson to himself contained these words: —

"Poor Thrall! I thought that either her virtue or her vice (meaning her love of her children or her pride) would have restrained her from such a marriage. She is now become a subject for her enemies to exult over, and for her friends, if she has any left, to forget or pity."

Harsh language, and exhibiting little of that allowance for human frailty which might have been expected from the author of "Rasselas" and the "Rambler." Did he or the rest of her acquaintance who joined in censuring or repudiating her, ever attempt to enter into her feelings, and weigh her conduct with reference to its tendency to promote her own happiness? Could they have done so, had they tried? Can any one so identify himself or herself with another as to be sure of the soundness of the counsel, or the justice of the reproof? She was neither im-

in a fishing-boat. The incident to which Johnson alludes is introduced in "The Abbot;" where the scene is laid on the seashore. The unusual though expressive term "irremeable," is defined in his dictionary, "admitting no return." His authority is Dryden's Virgil:

"The keeper dreamed, the chief without delay
Passed on, and took th' irremeable way."

The word is a Latin one anglicized:

"Evaditque celer ripam irremeabilis undæ."

* Memoirs, Vol. II. p. 66, note.

poverishing her children (who had all independent fortunes) nor abandoning them. She was setting public opinion at defiance, which is commonly a foolish thing to do; but what is public opinion to a woman whose heart is breaking, and who finds, after a desperate effort, that she is unequal to the sacrifice demanded of her? She accepted Piozzi deliberately, with full knowledge of his character; and she never repented of her choice.

The Lady Cathcart, whose romantic story is mentioned in "Castle Rackrent," was wont to say: "I have been married three times; the first for money, the second for rank, the third for love; and the third was worst of all." Mrs. Piozzi's experience would have led to an opposite conclusion. Her love match was an eminently happy one; and the consciousness that she had transgressed conventional observances or prejudices, not moral rules, enabled her to outlive and bear down calumny.*

Madame D'Arblay says that her father was not disinclined to admit Mrs. Piozzi's right to consult her own notions of happiness in the choice of a second husband, had not the paramount duty of watching over her unmarried daughters interfered. On this topic, Mrs. Piozzi says, "that her eldest daughter (then near twenty†) having refused to join the wedding party on their tour, she left a lady whom they appeared to like exceedingly, with them." This lady disappointed expectation, and left them, or, according to another version, was summarily dismissed by Miss Thrale (afterwards Lady Keith), who fortunately was endowed

* The *pros* and *cons* of the main question at issue are well stated in *Corinne*: " 'Ah, pour heureux,' interrompit le Comte d'Erfeuil, 'je n'en crois rien: on n'est heureux que par ce qui est convenable. La société a, quoi qu'on fasse, beaucoup d'empire sur le bonheur; et ce qu'elle n'approuve pas, il ne faut jamais le faire.' 'On vivrait donc toujours pour ce que la société dira de nous,' reprit Oswald; 'et ce qu'on pense et ce qu'on sent ne servirait jamais de guide.' 'C'est très bien dit,' reprit le comte, 'très-philosophiquement pensé: mais avec ces maximes là, l'on se perd; et quand l'amour est passé, le blâme de l'opinion reste. Moi qui vous paraissais léger, je ne ferai jamais rien qui puisse m'attirer la désapprobation du monde. On peut se permettre de petites libertés, d'aimables plaisanteries, qui annoncent de l'indépendance dans la manière d'agir; car, quand cela touche au sérieux.' — 'Mais le sérieux,' répondit Lord Nelvil, 'c'est l'amour et le bonheur.' " — *Corinne*, liv. ix. ch. 1.

† In a note on the visit to Chatsworth with Johnson in July, 1774, Mrs. Piozzi says, "I remember Lady Keith, then ten years old, was the most amused of any of the party." She was born in September, 1764.

with the precise description of qualities required by the emergency : clearness of judgment, high principle, firmness, and energy. She could not take up her abode with either of her guardians, one a bachelor under forty, the other the prototype of Briggs, the old miser in "Cæcilla." She could not accept Johnson's hospitality in Bolt Court, still tenanted by the survivors of his menagerie ; where, a few months later, she sat by his death-bed and received his blessing. She therefore called to her aid an old nurse-maid, named Tib, who had been much trusted by her father, and with this homely but respectable duenna, she shut herself up in the house at Brighton, limited her expenses to her allowance of £ 200 a year, and resolutely set about the course of study which seemed best adapted to absorb attention and prevent her thoughts from wandering. Hebrew, Mathematics, Fortification, and Perspective have been named to me by one of her trusted friends as specimens of her acquirements and pursuits.

"There 's a Divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we may."

In that solitary abode at Brighton, and in the companionship of Tib, may have been laid the foundation of a character than which few, through the changeful scenes of a long and prosperous life, have exercised more beneficial influence or inspired more genuine esteem. On coming of age, and being put into possession of her fortune, she hired a house in London, and took her two eldest sisters to live with her. They had been at school whilst she was living at Brighton. The fourth and youngest, afterwards Mrs. Mostyn, had accompanied the mother. On the return of Mr. and Mrs. Piozzi, Miss Thrale made a point of paying them every becoming attention, and Piozzi was frequently dining with her. Latterly, she used to speak of him as a very worthy sort of man, who was not to blame for marrying a rich and distinguished woman who took a fancy to him. The other sisters seem to have adopted the same tone ; and, so far as I can learn, no one of them is open to the imputation of filial unkindness, or has suffered from maternal neglect in a manner to bear out Dr. Burney's forebodings by the result. Occasional expressions of querulousness are matters of course in family

differences, and are seldom totally suppressed by the utmost exertion of good feeling and good sense.

On the 19th October, 1784, she writes to Mr. Lysons from Turin : —

“ We are going to Alexandria, Genoa, and Pavia, and then to Milan for the winter, as Mr. Piozzi finds friends everywhere to delay us, and I hate hurry and fatigue ; it takes away all one’s attention. Lyons was a delightful place to me, and we were so feasted there by my husband’s old acquaintances. The Duke and Duchess of Cumberland too paid us a thousand caressing civilities where we met with them, and we had no means of musical parties neither. The Prince of Sisterna came yesterday to visit Mr. Piozzi, and present me with the key of his box at the opera for the time we stay at Turin. Here’s honor and glory for you ! When Miss Thrale hears of it, she will write perhaps ; the other two are very kind and affectionate.”

“ Milan, Dec. 7.

“ I correspond constantly and copiously with such of my daughters as are willing to answer my letters, and I have at last received one cold scrap from the eldest, which I instantly and tenderly replied to. Mrs. Lewis too, and Miss Nicholson, have had accounts of my health, for I found *them* disinterested and attached to me : those who led the stream, or watched which way it ran, that they might follow it, were not, I suppose, desirous of my correspondence, and till they are so, shall not be troubled with it.”

Miss Nicholson was the lady left with the daughters, and Mrs. Piozzi could have heard no harm of her from them or others when she wrote thus. The same inference must be drawn from the allusions to this lady at subsequent periods. “ Once more,” she continues, “ keep me out of the newspapers if you possibly can ; they have given me many a miserable hour, and my enemies many a merry one ; but I have not deserved public persecution, and am very happy to live in a place where one is free from unmerited insolence, such as London abounds with.

“ ‘ Illic credulitas, illic temerarius error.’ ”

God bless you, and may you conquer the many-headed monster which I could never charm to silence.”

The license of our press is a frequent topic of complaint. But here is a woman who had never placed herself before the public in any way so as to give them a right to discuss her conduct or affairs, not even as an author, made the butt of every description of offensive personality for months, with the tacit encouragement of the first moralist of the age.

On July 27th, 1785, she writes from Florence : —

"We celebrated our wedding anniversary two days ago with a magnificent dinner and concert, at which the Prince Corsini and his brother the Cardinal did us the honor of assisting, and wished us joy in the tenderest and politest terms. Lord and Lady Cowper, Lord Pembroke, and *all* the English indeed, dote on my husband, and show us every possible attention."

"I was tempted to observe," says the author of "*Piozziana*," "that I thought, as I still do, that Johnson's anger on the event of her second marriage was excited by some feeling of disappointment; and that I suspected he had formed some hope of attaching her to himself. It would be disingenuous on my part to attempt to repeat her answer. I forget it; but the impression on my mind is that she did not contradict me." Sir James Fallowes's marginal note on this passage is: "This was an absurd notion, and I can undertake to say it was the last idea that ever entered her head; for when I once alluded to the subject, she ridiculed the idea: she told me she always felt for Johnson the same respect and veneration as for a Pascal."

On the margin of the passage in which Boswell says, "Johnson's wishing to unite himself with this rich widow was much talked of, but I believe without foundation," — she has written, "I believe so too!!" The report, however, was enough to bring into play the light artillery of the wits, one of whose best hits was an "Ode to Mrs. Thrale, by Samuel Johnson, LL. D., on their approaching Nuptials," beginning : —

"If e'er my fingers touched the lyre,
In satire fierce, in pleasure gay,
Shall not my Thralia's smiles inspire,
Shall Sam refuse the sportive lay?

"My dearest lady, view your slave,
Behold him as your very *Scrub* :

Ready to write as author grave,
Or govern well the brewing tub.

"To rich felicity thus raised,
My bosom glows with amorous fire;
Porter no longer shall be praised,
'T is I Myself am *Thrale's Entire*."

She has written opposite these lines, "Whose fun was this?
It is better than the other." The other was:—

"Cervisial coctor's viduate dame,
Opinst thou this gigantick frame,
Procumbng at thy shrine,
Shall catinated by thy charms,
A captive in thy ambient arms
Perennially be thine."

She writes opposite: "Whose silly fun was this? Soame
Jenyn's?"

If the notion ever crossed Johnson's mind, it must have been dismissed some time prior to her marriage, which took place four months before his death in his seventy-sixth year. But the threatened loss of a pleasant house may have had a good deal to do with the sorrowing indignation of his set. Her meditated social extinction amongst them might have been commemorated in the words of the French epitaph:—

"Ci git une de qui la vertu
Etait moins que la table encensée;
On ne plaint point la femme abattue
Mais bien la table renversée."

Which may be freely rendered:—

"Here lies one who adulation
By dinners more than virtues earned;
Whose friends mourned not her reputation—
But her table—overtured."

The following paragraph is copied from the note-book of the late Miss Williams Wynn,* who had recently been reading a large collection of Mrs. Piozzi's letters to a Welsh neighbor:—

* Daughter of Sir Watkyn Wynn (the fourth baronet) and granddaughter of George Grenville, the Minister. She was distinguished by her literary taste and acquirements, as well as highly esteemed for the uprightness of her character,

"*London, March, 1825.*—I have had an opportunity of talking to old Sir William Pepys on the subject of his old friend, Mrs. Piozzi, and from his conversation am more than ever impressed with the idea that she was one of the most inconsistent characters that ever existed. Sir William says he never met with any human being who possessed the talent of conversation in such a degree. I naturally felt anxious to know whether Piozzi could in any degree add to this pleasure, and found, as I expected, that he could not even understand her.

"Her infatuation for him seems perfectly unaccountable. Johnson in his rough (I may here call it brutal) manner said to her, 'Why, Ma'am, he is not only a stupid, ugly dog, but he is an old dog too.' Sir William says he really believes that she combated her inclination for him as long as possible; so long, that her senses would have failed her if she had attempted to resist any longer. She was perfectly aware of her degradation. One day, speaking to Sir William of some persons whom he had been in the habit of meeting continually at Streatham during the lifetime of Mr. Thrale, she said, not one of them has taken the smallest notice of me ever since: they dropped me before I had done anything wrong. Piozzi was literally at her elbow when she said this."

The hearsay of hearsay cannot be set against the uniform and concurrent testimony of her written professions and her conduct; which show that she never regarded her second marriage as a degradation, and always took a high and independent, instead of a subdued or deprecating, tone with her alienated friends.

In a letter to a Welsh neighbor, near the end of her life, some time in 1818, she says:—

"Mrs. Mostyn (her youngest daughter) has written again on the road back to Italy, where she likes the Piozzis above all people, she says, *if they were not so proud of their family.* Would not that make one laugh two hours before one's own death? But I remember when Lady Egremont raised the whole nation's ill-

the excellence of her understanding, and the kindness of her heart. Her journals and note-books, carefully kept during a long life passed in the best society, are full of interesting anecdotes and curious extracts from rare books and manuscripts. They are now in the possession of her niece, the Honorable Mrs. Rowley.

will here, while the Saxons were wondering how Count Bruhle could think of marrying a lady born Miss Carpenter. The Lombards doubted in the mean time of my being a gentlewoman by birth, because my first husband was a brewer. A pretty world, is it not? A Ship of Fooles, according to the old poem; and they will upset the vessel by and by."

This is not the language of one who wished to apologize for a misalliance.

As to Piozzi's want of youth and good looks, Johnson's knowledge of womankind, to say nothing of his self-love, should have prevented him from urging this as an objection, or as an aggravation of her offence. He might have recollected the Roman matron in Juvenal, who considers the world well lost for an old and disfigured prize-fighter; or he would have quoted Spenser's description of Lust:—

"Who rough and rude and filthy did appear,
Unseemly man to please fair lady's eye,
Yet he of ladies oft was loved dear,
When fairer faces were bid standen by:
Oh! who can tell the bent of woman's phantasy?"

Madame Campan, speaking of Caroline of Naples, the sister of Marie Antoinette, says, she had great reason to complain of the insolence of a Spaniard named Las Casas, whom the king, her father-in-law, had sent to persuade her to remove M. Acton from the conduct of affairs and from about her person. She had told him, to convince him of the nature of her sentiments, that she would have Acton painted and sculptured by the most celebrated artists of Italy, and send his bust and his portrait to the King of Spain, to prove to him that the desire of fixing a man of superior capacity could alone have induced her to confer the favor he enjoyed. Las Casas had dared to reply, that she would be taking useless trouble; that a man's ugliness did not always prevent him from pleasing, and that the King of Spain had too much experience to be ignorant that the caprices of a woman were inexplicable. Johnson may surely be allowed credit for as much knowledge of the sex as the King of Spain.

There is no need, however, for citing precedents or authorities on the point; for Piozzi was about forty-one or forty-two, a year

or two younger than herself, and was not reputed ugly. Miss Seward (October, 1787) writes :—

“ I am become acquainted with Mr. and Mrs. Piozzi. Her conversation is that bright wine of the intellects which has no lees. Dr. Johnson told me truth when he said she had more colloquial wit than most of our literary women ; it is indeed a fountain of perpetual flow. But he did not tell me truth when he asserted that Piozzi was an ugly dog, without particular skill in his profession. Mr. Piozzi is a handsome man, in middle life, with gentle, pleasing, unaffected manners, and with very eminent skill in his profession. Though he has not a powerful or fine-toned voice, he sings with transcending grace and expression. I am charmed with his perfect expression on his instrument. Surely the finest sensibilities must vibrate through his frame, since they breathe so sweetly through his song.”

The concluding sentence contains what Partridge would call a *non sequitur*, for the finest musical sensibility may coexist with the most commonplace qualities. But the lady's evidence is clear and unequivocal on the essential point ; and another passage from her letters may assist us in determining the precise nature of Johnson's feelings towards Mrs. Piozzi, and the extent to which his later language and conduct regarding her were influenced by pique :—

“ Love is the great softener of savage dispositions. Johnson had always a metaphysic passion for one princess or another : first, the rustic Lucy Porter, before he married her nauseous mother ; next the handsome, but haughty, Molly Aston ; next the sublimated, methodistic Hill Boothby, who read her Bible in Hebrew ; and lastly, the more charming Mrs. Thrale, with the beauty of the first, the learning of the second, and with more worth than a bushel of such sinners and such saints. It is ridiculously diverting to see the old elephant forsaking his nature before these princesses :—

“ To make them mirth, use all his might, and writhe,
His mighty form disporting.”

“ This last and long-enduring passion for Mrs. Thrale was, however, composed perhaps of cupboard love, Platonic love,

and vanity tickled and gratified, from morn to night, by incessant homage. The two first ingredients are certainly oddly heterogeneous; but Johnson, in religion and politics, in love and in hatred, was composed of such opposite and contradictory materials as never before met in the human mind. This is the reason why folk are never weary of talking, reading, and writing about a man —

“ So various that he seemed to be,
Not one, but all mankind’s epitome.” *

In the teeth of Miss Seward’s description of Piozzi, it would be difficult to maintain Lord Macaulay’s statement that Mrs. Piozzi “fell in love with a music-master from Brescia, in whom nobody but herself could see anything to admire;” and the eloquent passage which succeeds would have been materially impaired by adherence to the facts:—

“ She did not conceal her joy when he (Johnson) left Streatham. She never pressed him to return; and if he came unbidden, she received him in a manner which convinced him that he was no longer a welcome guest. He took the very intelligible hints which she gave. He read, for the last time, a chapter of the Greek Testament in the library which had been formed by himself. In a solemn and tender prayer he commended the house and its inmates to the Divine protection, and with emotions which choked his voice and convulsed his powerful frame, left forever that beloved home for the gloomy and desolate house behind Fleet Street, where the few and the evil days which still remained to him were to run out.”

Streatham had been let to Lord Shelburne, and they quitted it together. She never pressed him to return, because she never returned during his lifetime; for the same reason, he could not have come again as her guest, bidden or unbidden: and instead of leaving Streatham for his gloomy and desolate house behind Fleet Street, he accompanied her, on the wonted footing of an inmate, first to Brighton, where we have seen him making himself particularly disagreeable to her friends, and then to Argyll Street.

* Letters, Vol. II. p. 103.

The brilliant historian proceeds : —

“Here (Bolt Court) in June, 1783, he had a paralytic stroke, from which however he recovered, and which does not appear to have impaired his intellectual faculties. But other maladies came thick upon him. His asthma tormented him day and night. Dropsical symptoms made their appearance. While sinking under a complication of diseases, he heard that the woman whose friendship had been the chief happiness of sixteen years of his life had married an Italian fiddler; that all London was crying shame upon her; and that the newspapers and magazines were filled with allusions to the Ephesian matron and the two pictures in ‘Hamlet.’ He vehemently said he would try to forget her existence. He never uttered her name. Every memorial of her which met his eye he flung into the fire. She meanwhile fled from the laughter and hisses of her countrymen and countrywomen to a land where she was unknown, hastened across Mount Cenis, and learned, while passing a merry Christmas of concerts and lemonade parties at Milan, that the great man with whose name hers is inseparably associated, had ceased to exist.”

In his last letter on her marriage, Johnson admits that he has no pretence to resent it, as it has not been injurious to him, and says : “Whatever I can contribute to your happiness I am ever ready to repay, for that kindness which soothed twenty years of a life radically wretched.” If, directly after writing this, he vowed to forget her existence, and flung every memorial of her into the fire, he stands self-convicted of ingratitude and deceit. The only proof that he did anything of the sort is a passage in Madame D’Arblay’s diary : “We talked of poor Mrs. Thrale, but only for a moment; for I saw him so greatly moved, and with such severity of displeasure, that I hastened to start another subject, and he solemnly enjoined me to mention that no more.” This was towards the end of November, a few weeks before he died, and he might be excused for being angry at the introduction of any agitating topic.

His affection for Mrs. Piozzi was far from being a deep, devoted, or absorbing feeling at any time; and the gloom which settled upon the evening of his days was owing to his infirmities

and his dread of death, not to the loosening of cherished ties, nor to the compelled solitude of a confined dwelling in Bolt Court. The plain matter of fact is that, during the last two years of his life, he was seldom a month together at his own house, unless when the state of his health prevented him from enjoying the hospitality of his friends. When the fatal marriage was announced, he was planning what Boswell calls a jaunt into the country; and in a letter dated Lichfield, Oct. 4, 1784, he says: "I passed the first part of the summer at Oxford (with Dr. Adams); afterwards I went to Lichfield, then to Ashbourne (Dr. Taylor's), and a week ago I returned to Lichfield, then to Ashbourne (Dr. Taylor's), and a week ago I returned to Lichfield."

In the journal which he kept for Dr. Brocklesby, he writes, Oct. 20: "The town is my element; there are my friends, there are my books, to which I have not yet bid farewell, and there are my amusements. Sir Joshua told me long ago that my vocation was to public life; and I hope still to keep my station, till God shall bid me *Go in peace*."

Thrale died on the 4th of April. "On Friday, April 6 (writes Boswell), he (Johnson) carried me to dine at a club which at his desire had been lately formed at the Queen's Arms." In April, 1784, a year and a half after his heart was broken by the alleged expulsion from Streatham, Johnson sends a regular diary of his feelings, and proceedings to Mrs. Thrale. One item may suffice:—

"I received this morning your magnificent fish (*ante*, p. 67), and in the afternoon your apology for not sending it. I have invited the Hooles and Miss Burney to dine upon it to-morrow."

After another visit to Dr. Adams at Pembroke College, he returned about the middle of November to London, where he died December 13th, 1784. The proximate cause of his death was dropsy; and there is not the smallest sign of its having been accelerated or imbibtered by unkindness or neglect.

If he chose to repudiate and denounce one "whose kindness had soothed twenty years of a life radically wretched," because she refused to submit to his dictation in a matter of life and death to her and of comparative indifference to him, the severance of the tie was entirely his own act. In a letter to Mr. S. Lysons,

from Milan, dated December 7th, 1784, which proves that she was not wasting her time in "concerts and lemonade parties," she says: "My next letter shall talk of the libraries and botanical gardens, and twenty other clever things here. I wish you a comfortable Christmas, and a happy beginning of the year 1785. Do not neglect Dr. Johnson: you will never see any other mortal so wise or so good. I keep his picture in my chamber, and his works on my chimney."

"Forgiveness to the injured doth belong,
But they ne'er pardon who have done the wrong."

The reader will not fail to admire the rhetorical skill with which the banishment from Streatham, the gloomy and desolate home, the marriage with the Italian fiddler, the painful and melancholy death, and the merry Christmas, have been grouped together with the view of giving picturesqueness, impressive unity, and damnatory vigor to the sketch. "Action, action, action," says the orator; "Effect, effect, effect," says the historian. Give Archimedes a place to stand on, and he would move the world. Give Talleyrand a line of a man's handwriting, and he would engage to ruin him. Give Lord Macaulay a hint, a fancy, an insulated fact or phrase, a scrap of a journal, or the tag end of a song, and on it, by the abused prerogative of genius, he would construct a theory of national or personal character, which should confer undying glory or inflict indelible disgrace.

Mrs. Piozzi's life in Italy is sketched in her best manner by her own lively pen. Her confidence in Piozzi was amply justified by the result. She was in debt when she married him. Before their return to England, all her pecuniary embarrassments were removed by his judicious economy; although, her income being entirely in his power, nothing would have been easier for him than to make a purse for his family or himself, or to dazzle his countrymen by his splendor.

On February 3d, 1785, Walpole writes from London to Sir Horace Mann at Florence: —

"I have very lately been lent a volume of poems composed and printed at Florence, in which another of our ex-heroines, Mrs. Piozzi, has a considerable share; her associates three of

the English bards who assisted in the little garland which Ramsay the painter sent me. The present is a plump octavo; and if you have not sent me a copy by your nephew, I should be glad if you could get one for me: not for the merit of the verses, which are moderate enough and faint imitations of our good poets; but for a short and sensible and genteel preface by La Piozzi, from whom I have just seen a very clever letter to Mrs. Montagu, to disavow a jackanapes who has lately made a noise here, one Boswell, 'by Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson.' In a day or two we expect another collection by the same Signora."

Her associates were Greathead, Merry, and Parsons. The volume in question was "The Florence Miscellany." "A copy," says Mr. Lowndes, "having fallen into the hands of W. Gifford, gave rise to his admirable satire of the 'Baviad and Mœviad.'"*

In his *Journal of the Tour to the Hebrides*, Boswell makes Johnson say of Mrs. Montagu's "Essay on Skakespeare:" "Reynolds is fond of her book, and I wonder at it; for neither I, nor Beauclerc, nor Mrs. Thrale could get through it." This is what Mrs. Piozzi wrote to disavow, so far as she was personally concerned. The other collection expected from her whilst still in Italy, was her "Anecdotes of the late Samuel Johnson, during the last Twenty Years of his Life. Printed for T. Cadell in the Strand, 1786."

In her *Travels*, she says, "I have here (Leghorn) finished that work which chiefly brought me here, the 'Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson's Life.' It is from this port they take their flight for England whilst we retire for refreshment to the Bagni de Pisa."

The book attracted much attention in the literary and fashionable circles of London; and whilst some affected to discover in it the latent signs of wounded vanity and pique, others vehemently impugned its accuracy. Foremost amongst her assailants stood Boswell, who had an obvious motive for depreciating her, and he attempts to destroy her authority, first, by quoting Johnson's supposed imputations on her veracity; and, secondly, by individual instances of her alleged departure from truth.

Thus, Johnson is reported to have said, "It is amazing, Sir,

* The "Bibliographer's Manual," p. 534. The Preface (praised by Walpole) is reprinted amongst her literary remains.

what deviations there are from precise truth, in the account which is given of almost everything. I told Mrs. Thrale, You have so little anxiety about truth, that you never tax your memory with the exact thing."

Her proneness to exaggerated praise especially excited his indignation, and he endeavors to make her responsible for his rudeness on the strength of it.

"Mrs. Thrale gave high praise to Mr. Dudley Long (now North). *Johnson*. 'Nay, my dear lady, don't talk so. Mr. Long's character is very *short*! It is nothing. He fills a chair. He is a man of genteel appearance, and that is all. I know nobody who blasts by praise as you do; for whenever there is exaggerated praise, everybody is set against a character. They are provoked to attack it. Now there is Pepys; you praised that man with such disproportion, that I was incited to lessen him, perhaps more than he deserves. *His blood is upon your head*. By the same principle, your malice defeats itself; for your censure is too violent. And yet (looking to her with a leering smile) she is the first woman in the world, could she but restrain that wicked tongue of hers; she would be the only woman, could she but command that little whirligig.'"

Opposite the words I have printed in italics she has written: "An expression he would not have used; no, not for worlds."

In Boswell's note of a visit to Streatham in 1778, we find:—

"Next morning, while we were at breakfast, Johnson gave a very earnest recommendation of what he himself practised with the utmost conscientiousness: I mean a strict attention to truth even in the most minute particulars. 'Accustom your children,' said he, 'constantly to this: if a thing happened at one window, and they, when relating it, say that it happened at another, do not let it pass, but instantly check them: you do not know where deviation from truth will end.' *Boswell*. 'It may come to the door; and when once an account is at all varied in one circumstance, it may by degrees be varied so as to be totally different from what really happened.' Our lively hostess, whose fancy was impatient of the rein, fidgeted at this, and ventured to say, 'Nay, this is too much. If Dr. Johnson should forbid me to drink tea, I would comply, as I should feel the restraint only

twice a day ; but little variations in narrative must happen a thousand times a day, if one is not perpetually watching.' *Johnson*. 'Well, Madam, and you *ought* to be perpetually watching. It is more from carelessness about truth, than from intentional lying, that there is so much falsehood in the world.'

Now for the illustrative incident, which occurred during the same visit : —

"I had before dinner repeated a ridiculous story told me by an old man, who had been a passenger with me in the stage-coach to-day. Mrs. Thrale, having taken occasion to allude to it in talking to me, called it, 'The story told you by the old *woman*.' 'Now, Madam,' said I, 'give me leave to catch you in the fact : it was not an old *woman*, but an old *man*, whom I mentioned as having told me this.' I presumed to take an opportunity, in the presence of Johnson, of showing this lively lady how ready she was, unintentionally, to deviate from exact authenticity of narration."

In the margin : "Mrs. Thrale knew there was no such thing as an Old Man : when a man gets superannuated, they call him an old Woman."

The remarks on the value of truth attributed to Johnson are just and sound in the main, but when they are pointed against character, they must be weighed in reference to the very high standard he habitually insisted upon. He would not allow his servant to say he was not at home when he was. "A servant's strict regard for truth," he continued, "must be weakened by such a practice. A philosopher may know that it is merely a form of denial ; but few servants are such nice distinguishers. If I accustom a servant to tell a lie for me, have I not reason to apprehend that he will tell many lies for himself?"

One of his townspeople, Mr. Wickens, of Lichfield, was walking with him in a small meandering shrubbery formed so as to hide the termination, and observed that it might be taken for an extensive labyrinth, but that it would prove a deception, though it was, indeed, not an unpardonable one. "Sir," exclaimed Johnson, "don't tell me of deception ; a lie, Sir, is a lie, whether it be a lie to the eye or a lie to the ear." Whilst he was in one of these paradoxical humors there was no pleasing him ; and he has

been known to insult persons of respectability for repeating current accounts of events, sounding new and strange, which turned out to be literally true; such as the red-hot shot at Gibraltar, or the effects of the earthquake at Lisbon. Yet he could be lax when it suited him, as speaking of epitaphs: "The writer of an epitaph should not be considered as saying nothing but what is strictly true. Allowance must be made for some degree of exaggerated praise. In lapidary inscriptions a man is not upon oath." Is he upon oath in narrating an anecdote? or could he do more than swear to the best of his recollection and belief, if he was? Boswell's notes of conversations are wonderful results of a peculiar faculty, or combination of faculties, but the utmost they can be supposed to convey is the substance of what took place, in an exceedingly condensed shape, lighted up at intervals by the *ipsissima verba* of the speaker.

"Whilst he went on talking triumphantly," says Boswell, "I was fixed in admiration, and said to Mrs. Thrale, 'O for shorthand to take this down!' 'You'll carry it all in your head,' said she: 'a long head is as good as shorthand.'"* On his boasting of the efficiency of his own system of shorthand to Johnson, he was put to the test and failed.

Mrs. Piozzi at once admits and accounts for the inferiority of her own collection of anecdotes, when she denounces "a trick which I have seen played on common occasions, of sitting steadily down at the other end of the room, to write at the moment what should be said in company, either *by* Dr. Johnson or *to* him, I never practised myself, nor approved of in another. There is something so ill bred, and so inclining to treachery in this conduct, that, were it commonly adopted, all confidence would soon be exiled from society, and a conversation assembly-room would become tremendous as a court of justice." This is a hit at Boswell, who (as regards Johnson himself) had full license to take notes the best way he could. Madame D'Arblay's are much fuller, and bear a suspicious resemblance to the dialogues in her novels.

Mrs. Piozzi prefaces some instances of Johnson's rudeness and

* This happened March 21st, 1783, in Argyll Street, the year after Johnson had bidden farewell to Streatham.

harshness by the remark, that "he did not hate the persons he treated with roughness, or despise them whom he drove from him by apparent scorn. He really loved and respected many whom he would not suffer to love him." Boswell echoes the remark, multiplies the instances, and then accuses Mrs. Piozzi of misrepresenting their friend. After mentioning a discourteous reply to Robertson the historian, which was subsequently confirmed by Boswell, she proceeds to show that Johnson was no gentler to herself or those for whom he had the greatest regard. "When I one day lamented the loss of a first cousin, killed in America, 'Prithee, my dear (said he), have done with canting: how would the world be worse for it, I may ask, if all your relations were at once spitted like larks and roasted for Presto's supper?' — Presto was the dog that lay under the table." To this Boswell opposes the version given by Baretti, in the course of an angry invective, which Mr. Croker justly designates as brutal: —

"Mrs. Thrale, while supping very heartily upon larks, laid down her knife and fork, and abruptly exclaimed, 'O, my dear Johnson! do you know what has happened? The last letters from abroad have brought us an account that our poor cousin's head was taken off by a cannon-ball.' Johnson, who was shocked both at the fact and her light, unfeeling manner of mentioning it, replied, 'Madam, it would give *you* very little concern if all your relations were spitted like those larks, and dressed for Presto's supper.'"

This version, assuming its truth, aggravates the personal rudeness of the speech. But her marginal notes on the passage are: "Boswell appealing to Baretti for a testimony of the truth is comical enough! I never addressed him (Johnson) so familiarly in my life. I never did eat any supper, and there were no larks to eat."

"Upon mentioning this story to my friend Mr. Wilkes," adds Boswell, "he pleasantly matched it with the following sentimental anecdote. He was invited by a young man of fashion at Paris to sup with him and a lady who had been for some time his mistress, but with whom he was going to part. He said to Mr. Wilkes that he really felt very much for her, she was in

such distress, and that he meant to make her a present of 200 louis d'ors. Mr. Wilkes observed the behavior of Mademoiselle, who sighed indeed very piteously, and assumed every pathetic air of grief, but ate no less than three French pigeons, which are as large as English partridges, besides other things. Mr. Wilkes whispered the gentleman, 'We often say in England, "Excessive sorrow is exceeding dry," but I never heard "Excessive sorrow is exceeding hungry." Perhaps one hundred will do.' The gentleman took the hint." Mrs. Piozzi's marginal ebullition is: "Very like my hearty supper of larks, who never eat supper at all, nor was ever a hot dish seen on the table after dinner at Streatham Park."

Two instances of inaccuracy, announced as particularly worthy of notice, are supplied by "an eminent critic," understood to be Malone, who begins by stating, "I have often been in his (Johnson's) company, and never *once* heard him say a severe thing to any one; and many others can attest the same." Malone had lived very little with Johnson, and to appreciate his evidence, we should know what he and Boswell would agree to call a severe thing. Once, on Johnson's observing that they had "good talk" on the "preceding evening," "Yes, Sir," replied Boswell, "you tossed and gored several persons." Do tossing and goring come within the definition of severity? In another place he says, "I have seen even Mrs. Thrale stunned;" and Miss Reynolds relates that "One day at her own table he spoke so very roughly to her, that every one present was surprised that she could bear it so placidly; and on the ladies withdrawing, I expressed great astonishment that Dr. Johnson should speak so harshly to her, but to this she said no more than, 'O, dear, good man.'"

One of the two instances of Mrs. Piozzi's inaccuracy is as follows: "He once bade a very celebrated lady (Hannah More) who praised him with too much zeal perhaps, or perhaps too strong an emphasis (which always offended him) consider what her flattery was worth before she choked *him* with it."

Now, exclaims Mr. Malone, let the genuine anecdote be contrasted with this:—

"The person thus represented as being harshly treated, though

a very celebrated lady, was *then* just come to London from an obscure situation in the country. At Sir Joshua Reynolds's one evening, she met Dr. Johnson. She very soon began to pay her court to him in the most fulsome strain. 'Spare me, I beseech you, dear Madam,' was his reply. She still *laid it on*. 'Pray, Madam, let us have no more of this,' he rejoined. Not paying any attention to these warnings, she continued still her eulogy. At length, provoked by this indelicate and *vain* obtrusion of compliments, he exclaimed, 'Dearest lady, consider with yourself what your flattery is worth, before you bestow it so freely.'

"How different does this story appear, when accompanied with all those circumstances which really belong to it, but which Mrs. Thrale either did not know, or has suppressed!"

How do we know that these circumstances really belong to it? what essential difference do they make? and how do they prove Mrs. Thrale's inaccuracy, who expressly states the nature of the probable, though certainly most inadequate, provocation.

The other instance is a story which she tells us, on Mr. Thrale's authority, of an argument between Johnson and a gentleman, which the master of the house, a nobleman, tried to cut short by saying, loud enough for the Doctor to hear, "Our friend has no meaning in all this, except just to relate at the Club to-morrow how he teased Johnson at dinner to-day; this is all to do himself honor." "No, upon my word," replied the other, "I see no honor in it, whatever you may do." "Well, Sir," returned Mr. Johnson, sternly, "if you do not see the honor, I am sure I feel the disgrace." Malone, on the authority of a nameless friend, asserts that it was not at the house of a nobleman, that the gentleman's remark was uttered in a low tone, and that Johnson made no retort at all. As Mrs. Piozzi could hardly have invented the story, the sole question is, whether Mr. Thrale or Malone's friend was right. She has written in the margin: "It was the house of Thomas Fitzmaurice, son to Lord Shelburne, and Pottinger the hero."

"Mrs. Piozzi," says Boswell, "has given a similar misrepresentation of Johnson's treatment of Garrick in this particular (as to the Club), as if he had used these contemptuous expressions: 'If Garrick does apply, I'll blackball him. Surely one ought to sit in a society like ours —

“Unelbowed by a gamester, pimp, or player.”

The lady retorts, “He did say so, and Mr. Thrale stood astonished.” Johnson was constantly depreciating the profession of the stage.

Whilst finding fault with Mrs. Piozzi for inaccuracy in another place, Boswell supplies an additional example of Johnson’s habitual disregard of the ordinary rules of good breeding in society : —

“A learned gentleman [Dr. Vansittart], who, in the course of conversation, wished to inform us of this simple fact, that the council upon the circuit of Shrewsbury were much bitten by fleas, took, I suppose, seven or eight minutes in relating it circumstantially. He in a plenitude of phrase told us, that large bales of woollen cloth were lodged in the town-hall; that by reason of this, fleas nestled there in prodigious numbers; that the lodgings of the council were near the town-hall; and that those little animals moved from place to place with wonderful agility. Johnson sat in great impatience till the gentleman had finished his tedious narrative, and then burst out (playfully, however), ‘It is a pity, Sir, that you have not seen a lion; for a flea has taken you such a time, that a lion must have served you a twelvemonth.’”

He complains in a note that Mrs. Piozzi, to whom he told the anecdote, has related it “as if the gentleman had given the natural history of the mouse.” But, in a letter to Johnson, she tells *him*, “I have seen the man that saw the mouse,” and he replies, “Poor V——, he is a good man,” &c.; so that her version of the story is the best authenticated. Opposite Boswell’s aggressive paragraph she has written: “I saw old Mitchell of Brighthelmstone affront him (Johnson) terribly once about fleas. Johnson being tired of the subject, expressed his impatience of it with coarseness. ‘Why, Sir,’ said the old man, ‘why should not Flea bite o’ me be treated as Phlebotomy? It empties the capillary vessels.’”

Boswell’s *Life of Johnson* was not published till 1791; but the controversy kindled by the *Tour to the Hebrides* and the *Anecdotes* raged fiercely enough to fix general attention and afford ample scope for ridicule: “The Bozzi, &c. subjects,” writes Hannah More in April, 1786, “are not exhausted, though everybody

seems heartily sick of them. Everybody, however, conspires not to let them drop. *That*, the Cagliostro, and the Cardinal's necklace, spoil all conversation, and destroyed a very good evening at Mr. Pepys' last night." In one of Walpole's letters about the same time we find : —

"All conversation turns on a trio of culprits, — Hastings, Fitzgerald, and the Cardinal de Rohan. . . . So much for tragedy. Our comic performers are Boswell and Dame Piozzi. The cock biographer has fixed a direct lie on the hen, by an advertisement in which he affirms that he communicated his manuscript to Madame Thrale, and that she made no objection to what he says of her low opinion of Mrs. Montagu's book. It is very possible that it might not be her real opinion, but was uttered in compliment to Johnson, or for fear he should spit in her face if she disagreed with him ; but how will she get over her not objecting to the passage remaining ? She must have known, by knowing Boswell, and by having a similar intention herself, that his 'Anecdotes' would certainly be published : in short, the ridiculous woman will be strangely disappointed. As she must have heard that *the whole first impression of her book was sold the first day*, no doubt she expected on her landing to be received like the governor of Gibraltar, and to find the road strewn with branches of palm. She, and Boswell, and their Hero are the joke of the public. A Dr. Walcot, *soi-disant* Peter Pindar, has published a burlesque eclogue, in which Boswell and the Signora are the interlocutors, and all the absurdest passages in the works of both are ridiculed. The print-shops teem with satiric prints in them : one in which Boswell, as a monkey, is riding on Johnson, the bear, has this witty inscription, 'My Friend *delineavit*.' But enough of these mountebanks."

What Walpole calls the absurdest passages are precisely those which possess most interest for posterity ; namely, the minute personal details, which bring Johnson home to the mind's eye. Peter Pindar, however, was simply acting in his vocation when he made the best of them, as in the following lines. His satire is in the form of a Town Eclogue, in which Bozzy and Piozzi contend in anecdotes, with Hawkins for umpire : —

BOZZY.

"One Thursday morn did Doctor Johnson wake,
And call out, 'Lanky, Lanky,' by mistake —
But recollecting — 'Bozzy, Bozzy,' cried —
For in *contractions* Johnson took a pride!"

MADAME PIOZZI.

"I asked him if he knocked Tom Osborn down;
As such a tale was current through the town, —
Says I, 'Do tell me, Doctor, what befell.' —
'Why, dearest lady, there is naught to tell:
I pondered on the *proper*'st mode to *treat* him —
The dog was impudent, and so I beat him!
Tom, like a fool, proclaimed his fancied wrongs;
Others, that I belabored, held their tongues.'"

"Did any one, that he was *happy*, cry —
Johnson would tell him plumply, 't was a lie.
A Lady told him she was really so;
On which he sternly answered, 'Madam, no!
Sickly you are, and ugly, — foolish, poor;
And therefore can't be happy, I am sure.
'T would make a fellow hang himself, whose ear
Were, from such creatures, forced such stuff to hear.'"

BOZZY.

"Lo, when we landed on the Isle of Mull,
The megrims got into the Doctor's skull:
With such bad humors he began to fill,
I thought he would not go to Icolmkill:
But lo! those megrims (wonderful to utter!)
Were banished all by tea and bread and butter!"

At last they get angry, and tell each a few home truths: —

BOZZY.

"How could your folly tell, so void of truth,
That miserable story of the youth,
Who, in your book, of Doctor Johnson begs
Most seriously to know if cats laid eggs!"

MADAME PIOZZI.

"Who told of Mistress Montague the lie —
So palpable a falsehood? — Bozzy, fie!"

BOZZY.

"Who, madd'ning with an anecdotic itch,
Declared that Johnson called his mother *b-itch*?"

MADAME PIOZZI.

"Who, from M'Donald's rage to save his snout,
Cut twenty lines of defamation out?"

BOZZY.

"Who would have said a word about Sam's wig,
Or told the story of the peas and pig?
Who would have told a tale so very flat,
Of Frank the Black, and Hodge the mangy cat?"

MADAME PIOZZI.

"Good me! you're grown at once confounded *tender*;
Of Doctor Johnson's fame a *fierce* defender:
I'm sure you've mentioned many a pretty story
Not much redounding to the Doctor's glory.
Now for a *saint* upon us you would palm him —
First *murder* the poor man, and then *embalm him*!"

BOZZY.

"Well, Ma'am! since all that Johnson said or wrote,
You hold so sacred, how have you forgot
To grant the wonder-hunting world a reading
Of Sam's Epistle, just before your *wedding*;
Beginning thus (in strains not formed to flatter),
'Madam,
If that most ignominious matter
Be not concluded' —

Farther shall I say?

No — we shall have it from *yourself* some day,
To justify your passion for the *Youth*,
With all the charms of eloquence and truth."

MADAME PIOZZI.

"What was my marriage, Sir, to *you* or *him*?
He tell me what to do! — a pretty whim!
He, to *propriety* (the beast) *resort*!
As well might *elephants* *preside* at court.
Lord! let the world to *damn* my match *agree*;
Good God! James Boswell, what's *that world* to *me*?
The folks who paid respects to Mistress Thrale,
Fed on her pork, poor souls! and swilled her ale,
May *sicken* at Piozzi, nine in ten —
Turn up the nose of scorn — good God! what then?
For *me*, the Devil may fetch their souls so *great*;
They keep their homes, and *I*, thank God, my meat.
When they, poor owls! shall beat their cage, a jail,
I, unconfined, shall spread my peacock tail;
Free as the birds of air, enjoy my ease,
Choose my own food, and see what climes I please.

*I suffer only — if I'm in the wrong:
So, now, you prating puppy, hold your tongue."*

Walpole's opinion of the book itself had been expressed in a preceding letter, dated March 28th, 1786: —

"Two days ago appeared Madame Piozzi's *Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson*. I am lamentably disappointed, — in her, I mean: not in him. I had conceived a favorable opinion of her capacity. But this new book is wretched; a high-varnished preface to a heap of rubbish in a very vulgar style, and too void of method even for such a farrago. The Signora talks of her doctor's *expanded* mind, and has contributed her mite to show that never mind was narrower. In fact, the poor woman is to be pitied: he was mad, and his disciples did not find it out, but have unveiled all his defects; nay, have exhibited all his brutalities as wit, and his worst conundrums as humor. Judge! The Piozzi relates that a young man asking him where Palmyra was, he replied: 'In Ireland: it was a bog planted with palm-trees.'"

Walpole's statement that the whole first impression was sold the first day is confirmed by one of her letters, and may be placed alongside of a statement of Johnson's reported in the book. Clarissa being mentioned as a perfect character, "on the contrary (said he) you may observe there is always something which she prefers to truth. Fielding's *Amelia* was the most pleasing heroine of all the romances; but that vile broken nose never cured, ruined the sale of perhaps the only book, which being printed off betimes one morning, a new edition was called for before night."

In April, 1786, Hannah More writes: —

"Mrs. Piozzi's book is much in fashion. It is indeed entertaining, but there are two or three passages exceedingly unkind to Garrick which filled me with indignation. If Johnson had been envious enough to utter them, she might have been prudent enough to suppress them."

In a preceding letter she had said: —

"Boswell tells me he is printing anecdotes of Dr. Johnson, not his *life*, but, as he has the vanity to call it, his *pyramid*. I besought his tenderness for our virtuous and most revered departed friend, and begged he would mitigate some of his asperities. He

said roughly, he would not cut off his claws, nor make a tiger a cat to please anybody." The retort will serve for both Mrs. Piozzi and himself.

The copy of the "Anecdotes" in my possession has two inscriptions on the blank leaves before the title-page. The one is in Mrs. Piozzi's handwriting: "This little dirty book is kindly accepted by Sir James Fellowes from his obliged friend, H. L. Piozzi, 14th February, 1816;" the other: "This copy of the 'Anecdotes' was found at Bath, covered with dirt, the book having been long out of print,* and after being bound was presented to me by my excellent friend, H. L. P. (signed) J. F."

It is enriched by marginal notes in her handwriting, which enable us to fill up a few puzzling blanks, besides supplying some information respecting men and books, which will be prized by all lovers of literature.

One of the anecdotes runs thus: "I asked him once concerning the conversation powers of a gentleman with whom I was myself unacquainted. 'He talked to me at the Club one day (replies our Doctor) concerning Catiline's conspiracy; so I withdrew my attention, and thought about Tom Thumb.'"

In the margin is written "Charles James Fox." Mr. Croker came to the conclusion that the gentleman was Mr. Vesey. Boswell says that Fox never talked with any freedom in the presence of Johnson, who accounted for his reserve by suggesting that a man who is used to the applause of the House of Commons has no wish for that of a private company. But the real cause was his sensitiveness to rudeness, his own temper being singularly sweet. By an odd coincidence he occupied the presidential chair at the Club on the evening when Johnson emphatically declared every Whig to be a scoundrel. Again: "On an occasion of less consequence, when he turned his back on Lord Bolingbroke in the rooms at Brighthelmstone, he made this excuse: 'I am not obliged, Sir,' said he to Mr. Thrale, who stood fretting, 'to find reasons for respecting the rank of him who will not condescend to declare it by his dress or some other visible mark: what are stars and other signs of superiority made for?' The next even-

* The "Anecdotes" were reprinted by Messrs. Longman in 1856, and form part of their "Traveller's Library."

ing, however, he made us comical amends, by sitting by the same nobleman, and haranguing very loudly about the nature, and use, and abuse of divorces. Many people gathered round them to hear what was said, and when my husband called him away, and told him to whom he had been talking, received an answer which I will not write down."

The marginal note is : " He said, ' Why, Sir, I did not know the man. If he will put on no other mark of distinction, let us make him wear his horns.' " Lord Bolingbroke had divorced his wife, afterwards Lady Diana Beauclerc, for infidelity.

A marginal note, naming the lady of quality mentioned in the following anecdote, verifies Mr. Croker's conjectural statement concerning her : —

" For a lady of quality, since dead, who received us at her husband's seat in Wales, with less attention than he had long been accustomed to, he had a rougher denunciation : ' That woman,' cries Johnson, ' is like sour beer, the beverage of her table, and produce of the wretched country she lives in : like that, she could never have been a good thing, and even that bad thing is spoiled.' This was in the same vein of asperity, and I believe with something like the same provocation, that he observed of a Scotch lady, ' that she resembled a dead nettle ; were she alive,' said he, ' she would sting.' "

From similar notes we learn that the " somebody " who declared Johnson a tremendous converser was George Garrick ; and that it was Dr. Delap, of Sussex, to whom, when lamenting the tender state of his *inside*, he cried out : " Dear Doctor, do not be like the spider, man, and spin conversation thus incessantly out of thy own bowels." *

On the margin of the page in which Hawkins Browne is commended as the most delightful of conversers, she has written : " Who wrote the ' Imitation of all the Poets ' in his own ludicrous verses, praising the pipe of tobacco. Of Hawkins Browne, the pretty Mrs. Cholmondeley said she was soon tired ; because the first hour he was so dull, there was no bearing him ; the sec-

* Lord Melbourne complained of two ladies of quality, sisters, that they told him too much of their " natural history."

and he was so witty, there was no bearing him; the third he was so drunk, there was no bearing him." *

In the "Anecdotes" she relates that one day in Wales she meant to please Johnson with a dish of young peas. "Are they not charming?" said I, while he was eating them. "Perhaps," said he, "they would be so — to a pig;" meaning (according to the marginal note), because they were too little boiled.

"Of the various states and conditions of humanity, he despised none more, I think, than the man who marries for maintenance: and of a friend who made his alliance on no higher principles, he said once, 'Now has that fellow,' it was a nobleman of whom we were speaking, 'at length obtained a certainty of three meals a day, and for that certainty, like his brother dog in the fable, he will get his neck galled for life with a collar.'" The nobleman was Lord Sandys.

"He recommended, on something like the same principle, that when one person meant to serve another, he should not go about it slyly, or, as we say, underhand, out of a false idea of delicacy, to surprise one's friend with an unexpected favor; 'which, ten to one,' says he, 'fails to oblige your acquaintance, who had some reasons against such a mode of obligation, which you might have known but for that superfluous cunning which you think an elegance. O, never be seduced by such silly pretences,' continued he; 'if a wench wants a good gown, do not give her a fine smelling-bottle, because that is more delicate; as I once knew a lady lend the key of her library to a poor scribbling dependant, as if she took the woman for an ostrich that could digest iron.'" This lady was Mrs. Montague.

"I mentioned two friends who were particularly fond of looking at themselves in a glass. 'They do not surprise me at all by so doing,' said Johnson: 'they see, reflected in that glass,

* Query, whether this is the gentleman immortalized by Peter Plymley: "In the third year of his present Majesty (George III.) and in the thirtieth of his own age, Mr. Isaac Hawkins Brown, then upon his travels, danced one evening at the court of Naples. His dress was a volcano silk, with lava buttons. Whether (as the Neapolitan wits said) he had studied dancing under Saint Vitus, or whether David, dancing in a linen vest, was his model, is not known; but Mr. Brown danced with such inconceivable alacrity and vigor, that he threw the Queen of Naples into convulsions of laughter, which terminated in a miscarriage, and changed the dynasty of the Neapolitan throne."

men who have risen from almost the lowest situations in life ; one to enormous riches, the other to everything this world can give, — rank, fame, and fortune. They see, likewise, men who have merited their advancement by the exertion and improvement of those talents which God had given them ; and I see not why they should avoid the mirror.”

The one, she writes, was Mr. Cator, the other, Wedderburne. Another great lawyer and very ugly man, Dunning, Lord Ashburton, was remarkable for the same peculiarity, and had his walls covered with looking-glasses. His personal vanity was excessive ; and his boast that a celebrated courtesan had died with one of his letters in her hand, provoked one of Wilkes’s happiest repartees.

Opposite a passage descriptive of Johnson’s conversation, she has written : “ We used to say to one another familiarly at Streatham Park, ‘ Come, let us go into the library and make Johnson speak Ramblers.’ ”

The Piozzis returned from Italy in March, 1787, and soon after their arrival hired a house in Hanover Square, where they resided till May, 1790, when they removed to Streatham. The Johnsonian circle was broken up, and some of its most distinguished members were no more. Still it is curious to mark how this woman, who had “ fled from the laughter and hisses of her countrymen to a land where she was unknown,” was received where she was best known after an absence of less than three years. According to the Autobiography, her reception was in all respects satisfactory, and it only depended upon herself to resume her former place in society. A few extracts from her Diary will help to show how far this conclusion was well founded or the contrary : —

“ 1787, *May 1st.* — It was not wrong to come home after all, but very right. The Italians would have said we were afraid to face England, and the English would have said we were confined abroad in prisons or convents, or some stuff. I find Mr. Smith (one of our daughter’s guardians) told that poor baby Cecilia a fine staring tale how my husband locked me up at Milan and fed me on bread and water, to make the child hate Mr. Piozzi.

Good God! What infamous proceeding was this! My husband never saw the fellow, so could not have provoked him."

"*May 19th.* — We had a fine assembly last night indeed: in my best days I never had finer; there were near a hundred people in the rooms, which were besides much admired."

"1788, *January 1st.* — How little I thought this day four years that I should celebrate this 1st of January, 1788, here at Bath, surrounded with friends and admirers? The public partial to *me*, and almost every individual whose kindness is worth wishing for, sincerely attached to my husband."

"Mrs. Byron is converted by Piozzi's assiduity, she really likes him now; and sweet Mrs. Lambert told everybody at Bath she was in love with him."

"I have passed a delightful winter in spite of them, caressed by my friends, adored by my husband, amused with every entertainment that is going forward: what need I think about three sullen Misses? and yet!" —

"*August 1st.* — Baretti has been grossly abusive in the 'European Magazine' to me: *that* hurts me but little; what shocks me is that those treacherous Burneys should abet and puff him. He is a most ungrateful because unprincipled wretch; but I *am* sorry that anything belonging to Dr. Burney should be so monstrously wicked."

"1789, *January 17th.* — Mrs. Siddons dined in a coterie of my unprovoked enemies yesterday at Porteus's. She mentioned our concerts, and the Erskines lamented their absence from one we gave two days ago, at which Mrs. Garrick was present and gave a good report to the *Blues*. Charming Blues! blue with venom I think; I suppose they begin to be ashamed of their paltry behavior. Mrs. Garrick, more prudent than any of them, left a loophole for returning friendship to fasten through, and it *shall* fasten: that woman has lived a *very wise life*, regular and steady in her conduct, attentive to every word she speaks and every step she treads, decorous in her manners and graceful in her person. My fancy forms the Queen just like Mrs. Garrick: they are countrywomen, and have, as the phrase is, had a hard card to play; yet, never lured by tricksters nor subdued by superior powers, they will rise from the table unhurt either by others or

themselves, having played a *saving game*. I have run risques, to be sure, that I have ; yet —

“ ‘ When after some distinguished leap
She drops her pole and seems to slip,
Straight gath’ring all her active strength,
She rises higher half her length ; ’

and better than *now* I have never stood with the world in general, I believe. May the books just sent to press confirm the partiality of the Public ! ”

“ 1789, *January*. — I have a great deal more prudence than people suspect me for : they think I act by chance, while I am doing nothing in the world unintentionally, and have never, I dare say, in these last fifteen years, uttered a word to husband, or child, or servant, or friend, without being very careful what it should be. Often have I spoken what I have repented after, but that was want of *judgment*, not of *meaning*. What I said I meant to say at the time, and thought it best to say. I do not err from haste or a spirit of rattling, as people think I do : when I err, ’t is because I make a false conclusion, not because I make no conclusion at all ; when I rattle, I rattle on purpose.”

“ 1789, *May 1st*. — Mrs. Montague wants to make up with me again. I dare say she does ; but I will not be taken and left even at the pleasure of those who are much nearer and dearer to me than Mrs. Montague. We want no flash, no flattery. I never had more of either in my life, nor ever lived half so happily : Mrs. Montague wrote creeping letters when she wanted my help, or foolishly *thought* she did, and then turned her back upon me and sent her adherents to do the same. I despise such conduct, and Mr. Pepys, Mrs. Ord, &c., now sneak about and look ashamed of themselves, — well they may ! ”

“ 1790, *March 18th*. — I met Miss Burney at an assembly last night — ’t is six years since I had seen her : she appeared most fondly rejoiced, in good time ! and Mrs. Locke, at whose house we stumbled on each other, pretended that she had such a regard for me, &c. I answered with ease and coldness, but in exceeding good-humor ; and we talked of the King and Queen, his Majesty’s illness and recovery, and all ended, as it should do, with perfect indifference.”

"I saw *Master Pepys* too and Mrs. Ord; and only see how foolish and how mortified the people do but look."

"Barclay and Perkins live very genteely. I dined with them at our brewhouse one day last week. I felt *so* oddly in the old house where I had lived so long."

"The Pepyses find out that they have used me very ill. . . . I hope they find out too that I do not care. Seward, too, sues for reconciliation underhand; . . . so they do all; and I sincerely forgive them, — but, like the linnet in '*Metastasio*,' —

" ' Canto divien per prova
Nè più tradir si fa.' "

" ' When lim'd, the poor bird thus with eagerness strains,
Nor regrets his torn wing while his freedom he gains:
The loss of his plumage small time will restore,
And once tried the false twig, — it shall cheat him no more.' "

"1790, *July 28th*. — We have kept our seventh wedding-day and celebrated our return to *this house* * with prodigious splendor and gayety. Seventy people to dinner. . . . Never was a pleasanter day seen, and at night the trees and front of the house were illuminated with colored lamps, that called forth our neighbors from all the adjacent villages to admire and enjoy the diversion. Many friends swear that not less than a thousand men, women, and children might have been counted in the house and grounds, where, though all were admitted, nothing was stolen, lost, or broken, or even damaged, — a circumstance most incredible; and which gave Mr. Piozzi a high opinion of English gratitude and respectful attachment."

"1790, *December 1st*. — Dr. Parr and I are in correspondence, and his letters are very flattering: I am proud of his notice to be sure, and he seems pleased with my acknowledgments of esteem: he is a prodigious scholar; . . . but in the mean time I have lost Dr. Lort."

The following are some of the names most frequently mentioned in her Diary as visiting or corresponding with her after her return from Italy: Lord Fife, Dr. Moore, the Kembles, Dr. Currie, Mrs. Lewis (widow of the Dean of Ossory), Dr. Lort, Sir Lucas Pepys, Mr. Selwin, Sammy Lysons (*sic*), Sir Philip

* Streatham.

Clerke, Hon. Mrs. Byron, Mrs. Siddons, Arthur Murphy, Mr. and Mrs. Whalley, the Greatheads, Mr. Parsons, Miss Seward, Miss Lee, Dr. Barnard (Bishop of Killaloe, better known as Dean of Derry), Hinchcliffe (Bishop of Peterborough), Mrs. Lambert, the Staffords, Lord Huntingdon, Lady Betty Cobb and her daughter Mrs. Gould, Lord Dudley, Lord Cowper, Lord Pembroke, Marquis Araciel, Count Martenigo, Count Meltze, Mrs. Drummond Smith, Mr. Chappelow, Mrs. Hobart, Miss Nicholson, Mrs. Locke, Lord Deerhurst.

Resentment for her imputed unkindness to Johnson might have been expected to last longest at his birthplace. But Miss Seward writes from Lichfield, October 6th, 1787 :—

“Mrs. Piozzi completely answers your description : her conversation is indeed that bright wine of the intellects which has no lees. I shall always feel indebted to him (Mr. Perkins) for eight or nine hours of Mr. and Mrs. Piozzi’s society. They passed one evening here, and I the next with them at their inn.”

Again, to Miss Helen Williams, Lichfield, December 25th, 1787 :—

“Yes, it is very true, on the evening he (Colonel Barry) mentioned to you, when Mrs. Piozzi honored this roof, his conversation greatly contributed to its Attic spirit. Till that day I had never conversed with her. There has been no exaggeration, there could be none, in the description given you of Mrs. Piozzi’s talents for conversation ; at least in the powers of classic allusion and brilliant wit.”

That she and her eldest daughter should ever be again on a perfect footing of confidence and affection, was a moral impossibility. Estrangements are commonly durable in proportion to the closeness of the tie that has been severed or loosened ; and it is no more than natural that each party, yearning for a reconciliation and not knowing that the wish is reciprocated, should persevere in casting the blame of the prolonged coldness on the other. The occasional sarcasms which Mrs. Piozzi levels at Miss Thrale no more prove disregard or indifference, than Swift’s “only a woman’s hair” implies contempt for the sex.

Her marriage with Lord Keith in 1808 is thus mentioned in “Thraliana” :—

"The T. ('Thraliana') is coming to an end ; so are the Thrals. The eldest is married now. Admiral Lord Keith the man ; a *good* man for aught I hear ; a *rich* man for aught I am told ; a *brave* man we have always heard ; and a *wise* man I trow by his choice. The name no new one, and excellent for a charade, *e. g.*

"A Faery my first, who to fame makes pretence ;
My second a Rock, dear Britannia's defence ;
In my third when combined will too quickly be shown
The Faery and Rock in our brave Elphin-stone."

Mrs. Piozzi's next publication was "Letters to and from the late Samuel Johnson, LL. D., &c." In the Preface she speaks of the "Anecdotes" having been received with a degree of approbation she hardly dared to hope, and exclaims, "May these Letters in some measure pay my debt of gratitude ! they will not surely be the *first*, the *only* thing written by Johnson, with which our nation has not been pleased." A strange mode of conciliating favor for a book ; but she proceeds in a different strain : "The good taste by which our countrymen are distinguished, will lead them to prefer the native thoughts and unstudied phrases scattered over these pages to the more labored elegance of his other works ; as bees have been observed to reject roses, and fix upon the wild fragrance of a neighboring heath." Whenever Johnson took pen in hand, the chances were, that what he produced would belong to the composite order ; the unstudied phrases were reserved for his "talk," and he wished his Letters to be preserved.* The main value of these consists in the additional illustrations they afford of his conduct in private life, and of his opinions on the management of domestic affairs. The lack of literary and public interest is admitted and excused : —

"None but domestic and familiar events can be expected from a private correspondence ; no reflections but such as they excite can be found there ; yet whoever turns away disgusted by the insipidity with which this, and I suppose every correspondence must naturally and almost necessarily begin, — will here be likely to lose some genuine pleasure, and some useful knowledge of what our heroic Milton was himself contented to respect, as

" ' That which before thee lies in daily life. '

“And should I be charged with obtruding trifles on the public, I might reply, that the meanest animals preserved in amber become of value to those who form collections of natural history; that the fish found in Monte Bolca serve as proofs of sacred writ; and that the cart-wheel stuck in the rock of Tivoli, is now found useful in computing the rotation of the earth.”

“Horace Walpole,” says Boswell, “thought Johnson a more amiable character after reading his Letters to Mrs. Thrale, but never was one of the true admirers of that great man.” Madame D’Arblay came to an opposite conclusion; in her Diary, January 9th, 1788, she writes:—

“To-day Mrs. Schwellenberg did me a real favor, and with real good nature, for she sent me the letters of my poor lost friends, Dr. Johnson and Mrs. Thrale, which she knew me to be almost pining to procure. The book belongs to the Bishop of Carlisle, who lent it to Mr. Turbulent, from whom it was again lent to the Queen, and so passed on to Mrs. S. It is still unpublished. With what a sadness have I been reading! what scenes has it revived! what regrets renewed! These letters have not been more improperly published in the whole than they are injudiciously displayed in their several parts. She has given all, every word, and thinks that perhaps a justice to Dr. Johnson, which, in fact, is the greatest injury to his memory.

“The few she has selected of her own do her, indeed, much credit; she has discarded all that were trivial and merely local, and given only such as contain something instructive, amusing, or ingenious.”

She admits only four of Johnson’s letters to be worthy of his exalted powers: one upon Death, in considering its approach, as we are surrounded, or not, by mourners; another upon the sudden death of Mrs. Thrale’s only son. Her chief motive for “almost pining” for the book, steeped as she was in egotism, may be guessed:—

“Our name once occurred; how I started at its sight! ’Tis to mention the party that planned the first visit to our house.”

She says she had so many attacks upon “her (Mrs. Piozzi’s) subject,” that at last she fairly begged quarter. Yet nothing she could say could put a stop to, “How can you defend her in

this? how can you justify her in that?" &c., &c. "Alas! that I cannot defend her is precisely the reason I can so ill bear to speak of her. How differently and how sweetly has the Queen conducted herself upon this occasion. Eager to see the Letters, she began reading them with the utmost avidity. A natural curiosity arose to be informed of several names and several particulars, which she knew I could satisfy; yet when she perceived how tender a string she touched, she soon suppressed her inquiries, or only made them with so much gentleness towards the parties mentioned, that I could not be distressed in my answers; and even in a short time I found her questions made in so favorable a disposition, that I began secretly to rejoice in them, as the means by which I reaped opportunity of clearing several points that had been darkened by calumny, and of softening others that had been viewed wholly through false lights. To lessen disapprobation of a person, and so precious to me in the opinion of another, so respectable both in rank and virtue, was to me a most soothing task," &c.

This is precisely what many will take the liberty to doubt; or why did she shrink from it, or why did she not afford to others the explanations which proved so successful with the Queen?

The day following (January 10th) her feelings were so worked upon by the harsh aspersions on her friend, that she was forced, she tells us, abruptly to quit the room; leaving not her own (like Sir Peter Teazle), but her friend's character behind her.

"I returned when I could, and the subject was over. When all were gone, Mrs. Schwellenberg said, 'I have told it Mr. Fisher, that he drove you out from the room, and he says he won't do it no more.'

"She told me next, that in the second volume I also was mentioned. Where she may have heard this I cannot gather, but it has given me a sickness at heart, inexpressible. It is not that I expect severity; for at the time of that correspondence, at all times indeed previous to the marriage with Piozzi, if Mrs. Thrale loved not F. B., where shall we find faith in words, or give credit to actions? But her present resentment, however unjustly incurred, of my constant disapprobation of her conduct, may prompt some note or other mark, to point out her change of

sentiment. But let me try to avoid such painful expectations; at least not to dwell upon them. O, little does she know how tenderly at this moment I could run into her arms, so often opened to receive me with a cordiality I believed inalienable. And it was sincere then I am satisfied; pride, resentment of disapprobation, and consciousness of unjustifiable proceedings, — these have now changed her; but if we met, and she saw and believed my faithful regard, how would she again feel all her own return! Well, what a dream I am making!”

The ingrained worldliness of the diarist is ill-concealed by the mask of sensibility. The correspondence that passed between the ladies during their temporary rupture (*ante*, p. 72) shows that there was nothing to prevent her from flying into her friend's arms, could she have made up her mind to be seen on open terms of affectionate intimacy with one who was repudiated by the Court. In a subsequent conversation with which the Queen honored her on the subject, she did her best to impress her Majesty with the belief that Mrs. Piozzi's conduct had rendered it impossible for her former friends to allude to her without regret, and she ended by thanking her royal mistress for her forbearance.

“Indeed,” cried she, with eyes strongly expressive of the complacency with which she heard me, “I have always spoken as little as possible upon this affair. I remember but twice that I have named it; once I said to the Bishop of Carlisle that I thought most of these letters had better have been spared the printing; and once to Mr. Langton, at the drawing-room I said, ‘Your friend Dr. Johnson, Sir, has had many friends busy to publish his books, and his memoirs, and his meditations, and his thoughts; but I think he wanted one friend more.’ ‘What for, Ma'am?’ cried he. ‘A friend to suppress them,’ I answered. And, indeed, this is all I ever said about the business.”

Hannah More's opinion of the Letters is thus expressed in her *Memoirs*: —

“They are such as ought to have been written but ought not to have been printed: a few of them are very good: sometimes he is moral, and sometimes he is kind. The imprudence of editors and executors is an additional reason why men of parts

should be afraid to die.* Burke said to me the other day, in allusion to the innumerable lives, anecdotes, remains, &c., of this great man, ‘How many maggots have crawled out of that great body?’”

Miss Seward writes to Mrs. Knowles, April, 1788 :—

“And now what say you to the last publication of your sister wit, Mrs. Piozzi? It is well that she has had the good nature to extract almost all the corrosive particles from the old growler’s letters. By means of her benevolent chemistry, these effusions of that expansive but gloomy spirit taste more oily and sweet than one could have imagined possible.”

The letters contained two or three passages relating to Baretti, which exasperated him to the highest pitch. One was in a letter from Johnson, dated July 15th, 1775 :—

“The doctor says, that if Mr. Thrale comes so near as Derby without seeing us, it will be a sorry trick. I wish, for my part, that he may return soon, and rescue the fair captives from the tyranny of B——i. Poor B——i! do not quarrel with him; to neglect him a little will be sufficient. He means only to be frank, and manly, and independent, and perhaps, as you say, a little wise. To be frank he thinks is to be cynical, and to be independent is to be rude. Forgive him, dearest lady, the rather because of his misbehavior, I am afraid he learned part of me. I hope to set him hereafter a better example.”

The most galling was in a letter of hers to Dr. Johnson :—

“How does Dr. Taylor do? He was very kind I remember when my thunder-storm came first on, so was Count Manucci, so was Mrs. Montague, so was everybody. The world is not guilty of much general harshness, nor inclined I believe to increase pain which they do not perceive to be deserved. — Baretti alone tried to irritate a wound so very deeply inflicted, and he will find few to approve his cruelty. Your friendship is our best cordial; continue it to us, dear Sir, and write very soon.”

In the margin of the printed copy is written, “Cruel, cruel Baretti.” He had twitted her, whilst mourning over a dead child, with having killed it by administering a quack medicine

* An Ex Lord Chancellor complained that “Lives of the Lord Chancellors” had added a new pang to death.

instead of attending to the physician's prescriptions; a charge which he acknowledged and repeated in print. He published three successive papers in "The European Magazine" for 1788, assailing her with the coarsest ribaldry. "I have just read for the first time," writes Miss Seward in June, 1788, "the base, ungentleman-like, unmanly abuse of Mrs. Piozzi by that Italian assassin, Baretti. The whole literary world should unite in publicly reprobating such venomous and foul-mouthed railing." He died soon afterwards, May 5th, 1789, and the notice of him in the "Gentleman's Magazine" begins: "Mrs. Piozzi has reason to rejoice in the death of Mr. Baretti, for he had a very long memory and malice to relate all he knew." And a good deal that he did not know, into the bargain; as when he prints a pretended conversation between Mr. and Mrs. Thrale about Piozzi, which he afterwards admits to be a gratuitous invention and rhetorical figure of his own, for conveying what is a foolish falsehood on the face of it.

Baretti's death is thus noticed in "Thraliana," 8th May, 1789:

"Baretti is dead. Poor Baretti! I am sincerely sorry for him, and, as Zanga says, 'If I lament thee, sure thy worth was great.' He was a manly character, at worst, and died, as he lived, less like a Christian than a philosopher, refusing all spiritual or corporeal assistance, both which he considered useless to him, and perhaps they were so. He paid his debts, called in some single acquaintance, told him he was dying, and drove away that *Panada* conversation which friends think proper to administer at sick-bedsides with becoming steadiness, bid him write his brothers word that he was dead, and gently desired a woman who waited to leave him quite alone. No interested attendants watching for ill-deserved legacies, no harpy relatives clung round the couch of Baretti. He died!

" 'And art thou dead? so is my enmity:
I war not with the dead.'

"Baretti's papers — manuscripts I mean — have been all burnt by his executors without examination, they tell me. So great was his character as a mischief-maker, that Vincent and

Fendall saw no nearer way to safety than that hasty and compendious one. Many people think 't is a good thing for me, but as I never trusted the man, I see little harm he could have done me."

In the fury of his onslaught Baretti forgot that he was strengthening her case against Johnson, of whom he says: "His austere reprimand, and unrestrained upbraidings, when face to face with her, always delighted Mr. Thrale and were approved even by her children. 'Harry,' said his father to her son, 'are you listening to what the doctor and mamma are talking about?' 'Yes, papa.' And quoth Mr. Thrale, 'What are they saying?' 'They are disputing, and mamma has just such a chance with Dr. Johnson as Presto (a little dog) would have were he to fight Dash (a big one).'" He adds that she left the room in a huff, to the amusement of the party. If scenes like this were frequent, no wonder the "yoke" became unendurable.

Baretti was obliged to admit that, when Johnson died, they were not on speaking terms. His explanation is that Johnson irritated him by an allusion to his being beaten by Omai, the Sandwich Islander, at chess. Mrs. Piozzi's marginal note on Omai is: "When Omai played at chess and at backgammon with Baretti, everybody admired at the savage's good breeding and at the European's impatient spirit."

Amongst her papers was the following sketch of his character, written for "The World" newspaper.

"*Mr. Conductor.* — Let not the death Baretti pass unnoticed by 'The World,' seeing that Baretti was a wit if not a scholar: and had for five-and-thirty years at least lived in a foreign country, whose language he so made himself completely master of that he could satirize its inhabitants in their own tongue better than they knew how to defend themselves; and often pleased, without ever praising man or woman in book or conversation. Long supported by the private bounty of friends, he rather delighted to insult than flatter; he at length obtained competence from a public he esteemed not; and died, refusing that assistance he considered as useless, — leaving no debts (but those of gratitude) undischarged; and expressing neither regret of the past, nor fear of the future, I believe. Strong in his prejudices,

haughty and independent in his spirit, cruel in his anger, — even when unprovoked; vindictive to excess, if he through misconception supposed himself even slightly injured, pertinacious in his attacks, invincible in his aversions; the description of Menelaus in ‘Homer’s Iliad’ as rendered by Pope exactly suits the character of Baretti: —

“ ‘So burns the vengeful Hornet, soul all o’er,
Repulsed in vain, and thirsty still for gore;
Bold son of air and heat, on angry wings,
Untamed, untired, he turns, attacks, and stings.’ ”

In reference to this article, she remarks in “Thraliana”: —

“There seems to be a language now appropriated to the newspapers, and a very wretched and unmeaning language it is. Yet a certain set of expressions are so necessary to please the diurnal readers, that when Johnson and I drew up an advertisement for charity once, I remember the people altered our expressions and substituted their own, with good effect too. The other day I sent a Character of Baretti to the ‘World,’ and read it two mornings after more altered than improved, in my mind: but no matter: they will talk of *wielding* a language, and of *barbarous* infamy, — sad stuff, to be sure, but such is the taste of the times. They altered even my quotation from Pope; but that was too impudent.”

The comparison of Baretti to the hornet was truer than she anticipated: *animamque in vulnere ponit*. Internal evidence leads almost irresistibly to the conclusion that he was the author or prompter of “The Sentimental Mother: a Comedy in Five Acts. The Legacy of an Old Friend, and his ‘Last Moral Lesson’ to Mrs. Hester Lynch Thrall, now Mrs. Hester Lynch Piozzi. London: Printed for James Ridgeway, York Street, St. James’s Square, 1789. Price three shillings.” The principal *dramatis personæ* are Mr. Timothy Tunskull (Thrall), Lady Fantasma Tunskull, two Misses Tunskull, and Signor Squalici.

Lady Fantasma is vain, affected, silly, and amorous to excess. Not satisfied with Squalici as her established gallant, she makes compromising advances to her daughter’s lover on his way to a *tête-à-tête* with the young lady, who takes her wonted place on his knee with his arm round her waist. Squalici is also a domes-

tic spy, and in league with the mother to cheat the daughters out of their patrimony. Mr. Tunsull is a respectable and complacent nonentity.

The dialogue is seasoned with the same malicious insinuations which mark Baretti's letters in the "European Magazine;" without the saving clause with which shame or fear induced him to qualify the signed abuse, namely, that no breach of chastity was suspected or believed. It is difficult to imagine who else would have thought of reverting to Thrale's establishment eight years after it had been broken up by death.

Mrs. Piozzi had somehow contracted a belief, to which she alludes more than once with unfeigned alarm, that Mr. Samuel Lysons had formed a collection of all the libels and caricatures of which she was the subject on the occasion of her marriage. His collections have been carefully examined, and the sole semblance of warrant for her fears is an album or scrap-book containing numerous extracts from the reviews and newspapers, relating to her books. The only caricature preserved in it is the celebrated one by Sayers entitled "Johnson's Ghost." The ghost, a flattering likeness of the doctor, addresses a pretty woman seated at a writing-table:—

"When Streatham spread its pleasant board,
I opened learning's valued hoard,
And as I feasted, prosed.
Good things I said, good things I eat,
I gave you knowledge for your meat,
And thought the account was closed.

"If obligations still I owed,
You sold each item to the crowd,
I suffered by the tale.
For God's sake, Madam, let me rest,
No longer vex your *quondam* guest,
I'll pay you for your ale."

When addresses were advertised for on the rebuilding of Drury Lane, Sheridan proposed an additional reward for one without a phoenix. Equally acceptable for its rarity would be a squib on Mrs. Piozzi without a reference to the brewery.

Her manuscript notes on the two volumes of Letters are numerous and important, comprising some curious fragments of auto-

biography, written on separate sheets of paper and pasted into the volumes opposite to the passages which they expand or explain. They would create an inconvenient break in the narrative if introduced here, and they are reserved for a separate section.

In 1789 she published "*Observations and Reflections made in the course of a Journey through France, Italy, and Germany,*" in two volumes octavo of about 400 pages each. As happened to almost everything she did or wrote, this book was by turns assailed with inveterate hostility and praised with animated zeal. Walpole writes to Mrs. Carter, June 13, 1789:—

"I do not mean to misemploy much of your time, which I know is always passed in good works, and usefully. You have, therefore, probably not looked into Piozzi's Travels. I who have been almost six weeks lying on a couch have gone through them. It was said that Addison might have written his without going out of England. By the excessive vulgarisms so plentiful in these volumes, one might suppose the writer had never stirred out of the parish of St. Giles. Her Latin, French, and Italian, too, are so miserably spelt, that she had better have studied her own language before she floundered into other tongues. Her friends plead that she piques herself on writing as she talks: methinks, then, she should talk as she would write. There are many indiscretions too in her work, of which she will perhaps be told though Baretti is dead."

Miss Seward, much to her credit, repeated to Mrs. Piozzi both the praise and the blame she had expressed to others. On December 21st, 1789, she writes:—

"Suffer me now to speak to you of your highly ingenious, instructive, and entertaining publication; yet shall it be with the sincerity of friendship, rather than with the flourish of compliment. No work of the sort I ever read possesses, in an equal degree, the power of placing the reader in the scenes, and amongst the people it describes. Wit, knowledge, and imagination illuminate its pages—but the infinite inequality of the style!—Permit me to acknowledge to you, what I have acknowledged to others, that it excites my exhaustless wonder, that Mrs. Piozzi, the child of genius, the pupil of Johnson, should pollute, with the vulgarisms of unpolished conversation, her animated pages!—

that, while she frequently displays her power of commanding the most chaste and beautiful style imaginable, she should generally use those inelegant, those strange *dids*, and *does*, and *thoughts*, and *toos*, which produce jerking angles, and stop-short abruptness, fatal at once to the grace and ease of the sentence ; — which are, in language, what the rusty black silk handkerchief and the brass ring are upon the beautiful form of the Italian countess she mentions, arrayed in embroidery, and blazing in jewels.”

Mrs. Piozzi’s theory was that books should be written in the same colloquial and idiomatic language which is employed by cultivated persons in conversation. “ Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar ; ” and vulgar she certainly was not, although she sometimes indulged her fondness for familiarity too far. The period was unluckily chosen for carrying such a theory into practice ; for Johnson’s authority had discountenanced idiomatic writing, whilst many phrases and forms of speech, which would not be endured now, were tolerated in polite society.

The laws of spelling, too, were unfixed or vague, and those of pronunciation, which more or less affected spelling, still more so. “ When,” said Johnson, “ I published the plan of my dictionary, Lord Chesterfield told me that the word *great* should be pronounced so as to rhyme to *state* ; and Sir William Yonge sent me word that it should be pronounced so as to rhyme to *seat*, and that none but an Irishman would pronounce it *grait*. Now here were two men of the highest rank, one the best speaker in the House of Lords, the other the best speaker in the House of Commons, differing entirely.” Mrs. Piozzi has written on the margin : “ Sir William was in the right.” Two well-known couplets of Pope’s imply similar changes : —

“ Dreading e’en fools, by flatterers besieged,
And so obliging that he ne’er obliged.

Imperial Anna, whom three realms obey,
Here sometimes counsel takes, and sometimes tea.”

Within living memory, elderly people of quality, both in writing and conversation, stuck to Lunnun, Brummagem, and Cheyny (China). Lord Byron wrote *redde* (for *read*, in the past tense), and Lord Dudley declined being helped to apple *tart*. When,

therefore, we find Mrs. Piozzi using words or idioms rejected by modern taste or fastidiousness, we must not be too ready to accuse her of ignorance or vulgarity. I have commonly retained her original syntax and her spelling, which frequently varies within a page.

Two days afterwards, Walpole returns to the charge in a letter to Miss Berry, which were alone sufficient to prove the worthlessness of his literary judgments : —

“ Read ‘ Sinbad the Sailor’s Voyages,’ and you will be sick of Æneas’s. What woful invention were the nasty poultry that dinged on his dinner, and ships on fire turned into Nereids ! A barn metamorphosed into a cascade in a pantomime is full as sublime an effort of genius. I do not think the Sultanness’s narratives very natural or very probable, but there is a wildness in them that captivates. However, if you could wade through two octavos of Dame Piozzi’s *though’s* and *so’s* and *I trows*, and cannot listen to seven volumes of Scheherezade’s narratives, I will sue for a divorce in foro Parnassi, and Boccacini shall be my proctor.”

A single couplet of Gifford’s was more damaging than all Walpole’s petulance : —

“ See Thrale’s gray widow with a satchel roam,
And bring in pomp laborious nothings home.” *

This condemnatory verse is every way unjust. The nothings, or somethings, which form the staple of the book, are not labored ; and they are presented without the semblance of pomp or pretension. The Preface commences thus : —

“ I was made to observe at Rome some vestiges of an ancient

* “ She, one evening, asked me abruptly if I did not remember the scurrilous lines in which she had been depicted by Gifford in his ‘ Baviad and Moeviad.’ And, not waiting for my answer, for I was indeed too much embarrassed to give one quickly, she recited the verses in question, and added, ‘ How do you think “ Thrale’s gray widow ” revenged herself ? I contrived to get myself invited to meet him at supper at a friend’s house (I think she said in Pall Mall), soon after the publication of his poem, sat opposite to him, saw that he was “ perplexed in the extreme ; ” and smiling, proposed a glass of wine as a libation to our future good fellowship. Gifford was sufficiently a man of the world to understand me, and nothing could be more courteous and entertaining than he was while we remained together.’ ” — *Piozziana*.

custom very proper in those days. It was the parading of the street by a set of people called *Preciæ*, who went some minutes before the *Flamen Dialis*, to bid the inhabitants leave work or play, and attend wholly to the procession; but if ill-omens prevented the pageants from passing, or if the occasion of the show was deemed scarce worthy its celebration, these *Preciæ* stood a chance of being ill-treated by the spectators. A prefatory introduction to a work like this can hope little better from the public than they had. It proclaims the approach of what has often passed by before; adorned most certainly with greater splendor, perhaps conducted with greater regularity and skill. Yet will I not despair of giving at least a momentary amusement to my countrymen in general; while their entertainment shall serve as a vehicle for conveying expressions of particular kindness to those foreign individuals, whose tenderness softened the sorrows of absence, and who eagerly endeavored by unmerited attentions to supply the loss of their company, on whom nature and habit had given me stronger claims."

The Preface concludes with the happy remark that, "the labors of the press resemble those of the toilette; both should be attended to and finished with care; but once completed, should take up no more of our attention, unless we are disposed at evening to destroy all effect of our morning's study."

It would be difficult to name a book of travels in which anecdotes, observations, and reflections are more agreeably mingled, or one from which a clearer bird's-eye view of the external state of countries visited in rapid succession may be caught. Her sketch of the north of France, on her way to Paris, may be taken as an example:—

"*CHANTILLY*.—Our way to this place lay through Boulogne; the situation of which is pleasing, and the fish there excellent. I was glad to see Boulogne, though I can scarcely tell why; but one is always glad to see something new, and talk of something old: for example, the story I once heard of Miss Ashe, speaking of poor Dr. James, who loved profligate conversation dearly, 'That man should set up his quarters across the water,' said she; 'why, Boulogne would be a seraglio to him.'

"The country, as far as Montreuil, is a coarse one; thin herb-

age in the plains and fruitless fields. The cattle too are miserably poor and lean ; but where there is no grass, we can scarcely expect them to be fat : they must not feed on wheat, I suppose, and cannot digest tobacco. Herds of swine, not flocks of sheep, meet one's eye upon the hills ; and the very few gentlemen's seats that we have passed by seem out of repair, and deserted. The French do not reside much in private houses, as the English do ; but while those of narrower fortunes flock to the country towns within their reach, those of ampler purses repair to Paris, where the rent of their estate supplies them with pleasures at no very enormous expense. The road is magnificent, like our old-fashioned avenue in a nobleman's park, but wider, and paved in the middle : this convenience continued on for many hundred miles, and all at the king's expense. Every man you meet politely pulls off his hat *en passant* ; and the gentlemen have commonly a good horse under them, but certainly a dressed one.

"The sporting season is not come in yet, but I believe the idea of sporting seldom enters any head except an English one : here is prodigious plenty of game, but the familiarity with which they walk about and sit by our road-side, shows they feel no apprehensions.

"The pert vivacity of *La Fille* at Montreuil was all we could find there worth remarking : it filled up my notions of French flippancy agreeably enough ; as no English wench would so have answered one to be sure. She had complained of our avant coureur's behavior. '*Il parle sur le haut ton, mademoiselle*' (said I), '*mais il a le cœur bon :*' '*Ouydà*' (replied she, smartly), '*mais c'est le ton qui fait le chanson.*'"

She ends her notice of Chantilly thus : —

"The theatre belonging to the house is a lovely one ; and the truly princely possessor, when he heard once that an English gentleman, travelling for amusement, had called at Chantilly too late to enjoy the diversion, instantly, though past twelve o'clock at night, ordered a new representation, that his curiosity might be gratified. This is the same Prince of Condé, who going from Paris to his country seat here for a month or two, when his eldest son was nine years old, left him fifty louis d'ors as an allowance during his absence. At his return to town, the boy produced his

purse, crying, '*Papa! here's all the money safe; I have never touched it once.*' The Prince, in reply, took him gravely to the window, and opening it, very quietly poured all the louis d'ors into the street, saying, 'Now, if you have neither virtue enough to give away your money, nor spirit enough to spend it, always *do this* for the future, do you hear; that the poor may at least have a *chance for it.*'"

Although the extraordinary change effected by the French Revolution of 1789 is an everlasting topic, it is only on reading a book like Mercier's "*Tableau de Paris,*" or travels like these, that the full extent of that change is vividly brought home to us: —

"In the evening we looked at the new square called the Palais Royal, whence the Duc de Chartres has removed a vast number of noble trees, which it was a sin and shame to profane with an axe, after they had adorned that spot for so many centuries. — The people were accordingly as angry, I believe, as Frenchmen well can be, when the folly was first committed: the court, however, had wit enough to convert the place into a sort of Vauxhall, with tents, fountains, shops, full of frippery, brilliant at once and worthless, to attract them; with coffee-houses surrounding it in every side; and now they are all again *merry and happy*, synonymous terms at Paris, though often disunited in London; and *Vive le Duc de Chartres!*

"The French are really a contented race of mortals; — precluded almost from possibility of adventure, the low Parisian leads a gentle, humble life, nor envies that greatness he never can obtain; but either wonders delightedly, or diverts himself philosophically with the sight of splendors which seldom fail to excite serious envy in an Englishman, and sometimes occasion even suicide, from disappointed hopes, which never could take root in the heart of these unambitious people. Reflections of this cast are suggested to one here in every shop, where the behavior of the master at first sight contradicts all that our satirists tell us of the *supple Gaul*, &c. A mercer in this town shows you a few silks, and those he scarcely opens; *vous devez choisir*, is all he thinks of saying to invite your custom; then takes out his snuff-box, and yawns in your face, fatigued by your inquiries.

A Frenchman who should make his fortune by trade to-morrow, would be no nearer advancement in society or situation: why then should he solicit, by arts he is too lazy to delight in, the practice of that opulence which would afford so slight an improvement to his comforts? He lives as well as he wishes already; he goes to the Boulevards every night, treats his wife with a glass of lemonade or ice, and holds up his babies by turns, to hear the jokes of *Jean Pottage*.

“Emulation, ambition, avarice, however, must in all arbitrary governments be confined to the great; the *other* set of mortals, for there are none there of *middling* rank, live, as it should seem, like eunuchs in a seraglio; feel themselves irrevocably doomed to promote the pleasure of their superiors, nor ever dream of sighing for enjoyments from which an irremeable boundary divides them. They see at the beginning of their lives how that life must necessarily end, and trot with a quiet, contented, and unaltered pace down their long, straight, and shaded avenue; while we, with anxious solicitude and restless hurry, watch the quick turnings of our serpentine walk, which still presents, either to sight or expectation, some changes of variety in the ever-shifting prospect, till the unthought-of, unexpected end comes suddenly upon us, and finishes at once the fluctuating scene.”

“The contradictions one meets with every moment likewise strike even a cursory observer, — a countess in a morning, her hair dressed, with diamonds too, perhaps, a dirty black handkerchief about her neck, and a flat silver ring on her finger, like our ale-wives; a *femme publique*, dressed avowedly for the purposes of alluring the men, with a not very small crucifix hanging at her bosom; — and the Virgin Mary’s sign at an ale-house door, with these words: —

“‘Je suis la mere de mon Dieu,
Et la gardienne de ce lieu.’”

A zealous editor of Pope would readily brave the journey to Paris to pick up such an anecdote as the following: —

“I have stolen a day to visit my old acquaintance the English Austin Nuns at the Foffée, and found the whole community alive and cheerful; they are many of them agreeable women, and,

having seen Dr. Johnson with me when I was last abroad, inquired much for him ; Mrs. Fermor, the Prioress, niece to Belinda in the Rape of the Lock, taking occasion to tell me, comically enough, ‘that she believed there was but little comfort to be found in a house that harbored *poets* ; for that she remembered Mr. Pope’s praise made her aunt very troublesome and conceited, while his numberless caprices would have employed ten servants to wait on him ; and he gave one’ (said she) ‘no amends by his talk neither, for he only sate dozing all day, when the sweet wine was out, and made his verses chiefly in the night ; during which season he kept himself awake by drinking coffee, which it was one of the maids’ business to make for him, and they took it by turns.’”

At Milan she institutes a delicate inquiry : —

“The women are not behindhand in openness of confidence and comical sincerity. We have all heard much of Italian cicisbeism ; I had a mind to know how matters really stood ; and took the nearest way to information by asking a mighty beautiful and apparently artless young creature, *not noble*, how that affair was managed, for there is no harm done, *I am sure*, said I. ‘Why, no,’ replied she, ‘no great *harm* to be sure : except wearisome attentions from a man one cares little about ; for my own part,’ continued she, ‘I detest the custom, as I happen to love my husband excessively, and desire nobody’s company in the world but his. We are not *people of fashion* though you know, nor at all rich ; so how should we set fashions for our betters ? They would only say, see how jealous he is ! if *Mr. Such-a-one* sat much with me at home, or went with me to the Corso ; and I *must* go with some gentleman you know ; and the men are such ungenerous creatures, and have such ways with them : I want money often, and this *cavaliere servente* pays the bills, and so the connection draws closer, — *that’s all*.’ And your husband ! said I. — ‘O, why he likes to see me well dressed ; he is very good-natured, and very charming ; I love him to my heart.’ And your confessor ! cried I. — ‘O, why he is *used to it* ;’ in the Milanese dialect, — *è assuefaà*.”

At Venice, the tone was somewhat different from what would be employed now by the finest lady on the Grand Canal : —

"This firmly-fixed idea of subordination (which I once heard a Venetian say, he believed must exist in heaven from one angel to another) accounts immediately for a little conversation which I am now going to relate.

"Here were two men taken up last week, one for murdering his fellow-servant in cold blood, while the undefended creature had the lemonade tray in his hand going in to serve company; the other for breaking the new lamps lately set up with intention to light this town in the manner of the streets at Paris. 'I hope,' said I, 'that they will hang the murderer.' 'I rather hope,' replied a very sensible lady who sate near me, 'that they will hang the person who broke the lamps; for,' added she, 'the first committed his crime only out of revenge, poor fellow!! because the other had got his mistress from him by treachery; but this creature has had the impudence to break our fine new lamps, all for the sake of spiting *the Archduke!!*' The Archduke meantime hangs nobody at all; but sets his prisoners to work upon the roads, public buildings, &c., where they labor in their chains; and where, strange to tell! they often insult passengers who refuse them alms when asked as they go by; and, stranger still, they are not punished for it when they do."

"I would rather, before leaving the plains of Lombardy, give my countrywomen one reason for detaining them so long there: it cannot be an uninteresting reason to us, when we reflect that our first head-dresses were made by *Milaners*; that a court-gown was early known in England by the name of a *mantua*, from *Manto*, the daughter of Terebias, who founded the city so called; and that some of the best materials for making these mantuas is still named from the town it is manufactured in,—a *Padua* soy."

Here is a Frenchman's reason for preferring France to England and Italy:—

"A Frenchman whom I sent for once at Bath to dress my hair, gave me an excellent trait of his own national character, speaking upon that subject, when he meant to satirize ours. 'You have lived some years in England, friend,' said I; 'do you like it?' — 'Mais non, Madame, pas parfaitement bien.' — 'You have travelled much in Italy; do you like that better?' — 'Ah! Dieu ne plaise, Madame, je n'aime guères messieurs les Italiens.'

— ‘What do they do to make you hate them so?’ — ‘Mais c’est que les Italiens se tuent l’un l’autre’ (replied the fellow), ‘et les Anglois se font un plaisir de se tuer eux memes : pardi je ne me sens rien moins qu’un vrai gout pour ces gentillesse là, et j’aimerois mieux me trouver à *Paris*, pour rire un peu.’”

The lover sacrificing his reputation, his liberty, or his life, to save the fair fame of his mistress, is not an unusual event in fiction, whatever it may be in real life. Balzac, Charles de Bernard, and M. de Jarnac have each made a self-sacrifice of this kind the basis of a romance. But neither of them has hit upon a better plot than might be formed out of the Venetian story related by Mrs. Piozzi : —

“Some years ago, then, perhaps a hundred, one of the many spies who ply this town by night, ran to the state inquisitor, with information that such a nobleman (naming him) had connections with the French ambassador, and went privately to his house every night at a certain hour. The *messergrando*, as they call him, could not believe, nor would proceed, without better and stronger proof, against a man for whom he had an intimate personal friendship, and on whose virtue he counted with very particular reliance. Another spy was therefore set, and brought back the same intelligence, adding the description of his disguise ; on which the worthy magistrate put on his mask and bauta, and went out himself ; when his eyes confirming the report of his informants, and the reflection on his duty stifling all remorse, he sent publicly for *Foscarini* in the morning, whom the populace attended all weeping to his door.

“Nothing but resolute denial of the crime alleged could however be forced from the firm-minded citizen, who, sensible of the discovery, prepared for that punishment he knew to be inevitable, and submitted to the fate his friend was obliged to inflict : no less than a dungeon for life, that dungeon so horrible that I have heard Mr. Howard was not permitted to see it.

“The people lamented, but their lamentations were vain. The magistrate who condemned him never recovered the shock ; but Foscarini was heard of no more, till an old lady died forty years after in Paris, whose last confession declared she was visited with amorous intentions by a nobleman of Venice whose name she

never knew, while she resided there as companion to the ambassador. So was Foscari lost! so died he a martyr to love, and tenderness for female reputation!"

The Mendicanti was a Venetian institution which deserves to be commemorated for its singularity:—

"Apropos to singing;—we were this evening carried to a well-known conservatory called the Mendicanti, who performed an oratorio in the church with great, and I dare say deserved applause. It was difficult for me to persuade myself that all the performers were women, till, watching carefully, our eyes convinced us, as they were but slightly grated. The sight of girls, however, handling the double bass, and blowing into the bassoon, did not please *me*; and the deep-toned voice of her who sung the part of Saul, seemed an odd, unnatural thing enough. What I found most curious and pretty, was to hear Latin verses, of the old Leonine race broken into eight and six, and sung in rhyme by these women, as if they were airs of Metastasio; all in their dulcified pronunciation too, for the *patios* runs equally through every language when spoken by a Venetian.

"Well! these pretty sirens were delighted to seize upon us, and pressed our visit to their parlor with a sweetness that I know not who would have resisted. We had no such intent; and amply did their performance repay my curiosity for visiting Venetian beauties, so justly celebrated for their seducing manners and soft address. They accompanied their voices with the forte-piano, and sung a thousand buffo songs, with all that gay voluptuousness for which their country is renowned.

"The school, however, is running to ruin apace; and perhaps the conduct of the married women here may contribute to make such *conservatorios* useless and neglected. When the Duchess of Montepan asked the famous Louison d'Arquien, by way of insult, as she pressed too near her, '*Comment alloit le metier?*' '*Depuis que les dames s'en mêlent,*' (replied the courtesan, with no improper spirit,) '*il ne vaut plus rien.*'"

Describing Florence, she says:—

"Sir Horace Mann is sick and old; but there are conversations at his house of a Saturday evening, and sometimes a dinner, to which we have been almost always asked."

So much for Walpole's assertion that "she had broken with his Horace, because he could not invite her husband with the Italian nobility." She held her own, if she did not take the lead, in whatever society she happened to be thrown, and no one could have objected to Piozzi without breaking with her. In point of fact, no one did object to him.

One of her notes on Naples is : —

"Well, well ! if the Neapolitans do bury Christians like dogs, they make some singular compensations we will confess, by nursing dogs like Christians. A very veracious man informed me yester morning, that his poor wife was half broken-hearted at hearing such a Countess's dog was run over ; 'for,' said he, 'having suckled the pretty creature herself, she loved it like one of her children.' I bid him repeat the circumstance, that no mistake might be made : he did so ; but seeing me look shocked, or ashamed, or something he did not like, — 'Why, Madam,' said the fellow, 'it is a common thing enough for ordinary men's wives to suckle the lap-dogs of ladies of quality ;' adding, that they were paid for their milk, and he saw no harm in gratifying one's *superiors*. As I was disposed to see nothing *but* harm in disputing with such a competitor, our conference finished soon ; but the fact is certain.

"Indeed, few things can be foolisher than to debate the propriety of customs one is not bound to observe or comply with. If you dislike them, the remedy is easy ; turn yours and your horses' heads the other way."

On the margin she has written : —

"Mrs. Greathead could scarcely be made to credit so hideous a fact, till I showed her the portrait (at a broker's shop) of a woman *suckling a cat*."

At Vienna, she remarks : —

"So different are the customs here and at Venice, that the German ladies offer you chocolate on the same salver with coffee, of an evening, and fill up both with milk ; saying that you may have the latter quite black if you choose it, — 'Tout noir, Monsieur, à la Vénitienne ;' adding their best advice not to risque a practice so unwholesome. While their care upon that account reminds me chiefly of a friend, who lives upon the Grand Canal,

that, in reply to a long panegyric upon English delicacy, said she would tell a story that would prove them to be nasty enough, at least in some things; for that she had actually seen a handsome young nobleman, who came from London (*and ought to have known better*), souce some thick cream into the fine clear coffee she presented him with; which everybody must confess to be *vera porcheria!* a very *piggish trick!* — So necessary and so pleasing is conformity, and so absurd and perverse is it ever to forbear such assimilation of manners, when not inconsistent with the virtue, honor, or necessary interest: — let us eat sour-cROUT in Germany, frittura at Milan, macaroni at Naples, and beef-steaks in England, if one wishes to please the inhabitants of either country; and all are very good, so it is a slight compliance. Poor Dr. Goldsmith said once, ‘I would advise every young fellow setting out in life *to love gravy*,’ and added, that he had formerly seen a glutton’s eldest nephew disinherited because his uncle never could persuade him to say he liked gravy.”

Mr. Forster thinks that the concluding anecdote conveys a false impression of one

“Who wrote like an angel, but talked like poor Poll.”

“Mrs. Piozzi, in her travels, quite solemnly sets forth that poor Dr. Goldsmith said once, ‘I would advise every young fellow setting forth in life to love gravy,’ alleging for it the serious reason that ‘he had formerly seen a glutton’s eldest nephew disinherited because his uncle never could persuade him to say he liked gravy.’ Imagine the dulness that would convert a jocose saying of this kind into an unconscious utterance of grave absurdity.”* In his index may be read: “Mrs. Piozzi’s absurd instance of Goldsmith’s absurdity.” Mrs. Piozzi does not quote the saying as an instance of absurdity; nor set it forth solemnly. She repeats it, as an apt illustration of her argument, in the same semi-serious spirit in which it may be supposed to have been originally hazarded. Sidney Smith took a different view of this grave gravy question. On a young lady’s declining gravy, he exclaimed: “I have been looking all my life for a person who disliked gravy: let us vow eternal friendship.”

* Life of Goldsmith, Vol. II. p. 205. Mr. Forster allows her the credit of discovering the lurking irony in Goldsmith’s verses on Cumberland, Vol. II. p. 293.

The "British Synonymy" appeared in 1794. It was thus assailed by Gifford:—

"Though 'no one better knows his own house' than I the vanity of this woman; yet the idea of her undertaking such a work had never entered my head; and I was thunderstruck when I first saw it announced. To execute it with any tolerable degree of success required a rare combination of talents, among the least of which may be numbered neatness of style, acuteness of perception, and a more than common accuracy of discrimination; and Mrs. Piozzi brought to the task, a jargon long since become proverbial for its vulgarity, an utter incapability of defining a single term in the language, and just as much Latin from a child's Syntax, as sufficed to expose the ignorance she so anxiously labors to conceal. 'If such a one be fit to write on Synonimes, speak.' Pignotti himself laughs in his sleeve; and his countrymen, long since undeceived, prize the lady's talents at their true worth,

"'Et centum Tales * curto centusse licentur.'"

* Query Thrales? — *Printer's Devil.*

Other critics have been more lenient or more just. Enough philosophical knowledge and acuteness were discovered in the work to originate a rumor that she had retained some of the great lexicographer's manuscripts, or derived a posthumous advantage from her former intimacy with him in some shape. In "Thraliana," Denbigh, 2d January, 1795, she writes:—

"My 'Synonimes' have been reviewed at last. The critics are all civil for aught I see, and nearly just, except when they say that Johnson left some fragments of a work on Synonymy: of which God knows I never heard till now one syllable; never had he and I, in all the time we lived together, any conversation upon the subject."

Even Walpole admits that it has some marked and peculiar merits, although its value consists rather in the illustrative matter, than in the definition and etymologies, e. g.

"With regard to the words upon my list (lavish, profuse, prodigal), the same Dr. Johnson with his accustomed wisdom observed, That a young man naturally disposed to be LAVISH ever appears beset with temptations to extend his folly, and become

eminently PROFUSE, till he can scarcely avoid ending his days a PRODIGAL, distressed on every side in mind, body, and estate ; for while the neighbors and acquaintance repress that spirit of penurious niggardliness which now and then betrays itself in a boy of mean education, — because from *that* baseness indulged no pleasure or profit can accrue to standers by, — they all encourage an empty-headed lad in idle and expensive wastefulness, from whence something may possibly drop into every gaping mouth. I never myself heard a story of prodigality reduced to want, yet keeping up its character in the very hour of despair, so well authenticated as the following, which I gained from a native of Italy.

"Two gentlemen of that country were walking leisurely up the Hay-Market some time in the year 1749, lamenting the fate of the famous Cuzzona, an actress who some time before had been in high vogue, but was then, as they heard, in a very pitiable situation. 'Let us go and visit her,' said one of them, 'she lives but over the way.' The other consented ; and calling at the door, they were shown up stairs, but found the faded beauty dull and spiritless, unable or unwilling to converse on any subject. 'How's this,' cried one of her consolers, 'are you ill ? or is it but low spirits chains your tongue so ?' — 'Neither,' replied she ; 't is hunger, I suppose. I ate nothing yesterday, and now it is past six o'clock, and not one penny have I in the world to buy me any food.' — 'Come with us instantly to a tavern ; we will treat you with the best roast fowls and Port wine that London can produce.' — 'But I will have neither my dinner nor my place of eating it prescribed to *me*,' answered Cuzzona, in a sharper tone, 'else I need never have wanted.' — 'Forgive me,' cries the friend ; 'do your own way ; but eat in the name of God, and restore fainting nature.' She thanked him then ; and, calling to her a friendly wretch who inhabited the same theatre of misery, gave *him* the guinea the visitor accompanied his last words with ; 'and run with this money,' said she, 'to such a wine-merchant' (naming him) ; 'he is the only one keeps good Tokay by him. 'T is a guinea a bottle, mind you,' to the boy ; 'and bid the gentleman you buy it of give you a loaf into the bargain, — he wont refuse.' In half an hour or less the lad returned with the Tokay. 'But where,' cries

Cuzzona, 'is the loaf I spoke for?' 'The merchant would give me no loaf,' replies her messenger; 'he drove me from the door, and asked if I took him for a baker.' 'Blockhead!' exclaims she; 'why I must have bread to my wine, you know, and I have not a penny to purchase any. Go beg me a loaf directly.' The fellow returns once more with one in his hand and a halfpenny, telling 'em the gentleman threw him three, and laughed at his impudence. She gave her Mercury the money, broke the bread into a wash-hand basin which stood near, poured the Tokay over it, and devoured the whole with eagerness. This was indeed a heroine in PROFUSION. Some active well-wishers procured her a benefit after this; she gained about £350, 't is said, and laid out two hundred of the money instantly in a *shell-cap*. They wore such things then."

When Savage got a guinea, he commonly spent it in a tavern at a sitting; and, referring to the memorable morning when the "Vicar of Wakefield" was produced, Johnson says: "I sent him (Goldsmith) a guinea, and promised to come to him directly. I accordingly went as soon as I was dressed, and found that his landlady had arrested him for his rent. I perceived that he had already changed my guinea, and had got a bottle of Madeira and a glass before him." Mrs. Piozzi continues:—

"But Doctor Johnson had always some story at hand to check extravagant and wanton wastefulness. His improvise verses made on a young heir's coming of age are highly capable of restraining such folly, if it is to be restrained: they never yet were printed, I believe.

" 'Long expected one-and-twenty,
Lingering year, at length is flown;
Pride and pleasure, pomp and plenty,
Great — — —, are now your own.

" 'Loosened from the minor's tether,
Free to mortgage or to sell,
Wild as wind, and light as feather,
Bid the sons of thrift farewell.

" 'Call the Betseys, Kates, and Jennies,
All the names that banish care;

LAVISH of your grandsire's guineas,
Show the spirit of an heir.

" ' All that prey on vice or folly
Joy to see their quarry fly ;
There the gamester light and jolly,
There the lender grave and sly.

" ' Wealth, my lad, was made to wander,
Let it wander as it will ;
Call the jockey, call the pander,
Bid them come and take their fill.

" ' When the bonny blade carouses,
Pockets full, and spirits high —
What are acres ? what are houses ?
Only dirt or wet or dry.

" ' Should the guardian friend or mother
Tell the woes of wilful waste ;
Scorn their counsel, scorn their pother —
You can hang or drown at last.' "

These verses were addressed to Thrale's nephew, Sir John Lade, in August, 1780. They bear a strong resemblance to some of Burns's in his " Beggar's Sonata," written in 1785 : —

" What is title, what is treasure,
What is reputation's care ;
If we lead a life of pleasure,
Can it matter how or where ? "

In 1801, Mrs. Piozzi published " Retrospection ; or a Review of the Most Striking and Important Events, Characters, Situations, and their Consequences, which the Last Eighteen Hundred Years have presented to the View of Mankind." It is in two volumes quarto, containing rather more than 1,000 pages. A fitting motto for it would have been, *De omnibus rebus et quibusdam aliis*. The subject, or range of subjects, was beyond her grasp ; and the best that can be said of the book is that a good general impression of the stream of history, lighted up with striking traits of manners and character, may be obtained from it. It would have required the united powers and acquirements of Raleigh, Burke, Gibbon, and Voltaire to fill so vast a canvas

with appropriate groups and figures; and she is more open to blame for the ambitious conception of the work than for her comparative failure in the execution. Some slight misgiving is betrayed in the Preface:—

“If I should have made improper choice of facts, and if I should be found at length most to resemble Maister Fabyan of old, who, writing the Life of Henry V., lays heaviest stress on a new weathercock set up on St. Paul’s steeple during that eventful reign, my book must share the fate of his, and be like that forgotten; reminding before its death perhaps a friend or two of a poor man (Macbean) living in later times, that Doctor Johnson used to tell us of; who being advised to take subscriptions for a new Geographical Dictionary, hastened to Bolt Court and begged advice. There having listened carefully for half an hour, ‘Ah, but dear Sir,’ exclaimed the admiring parasite, ‘if I am to make all this eloquent ado about Athens and Rome, where shall we find place, do you think, for Richmond, or Aix la Chapelle?’”

The following letter, copied from an autograph book, relates principally to this book:—

“No. 5 Henrietta Street, Bath.
15th Dec. 1802.

“A thousand thanks, dear Sir, for the very agreeable letter which followed me here yesterday, and how good-natured it was in you to copy over what you justly conceived would give me so much pleasure.

“Our spirited young friend, my partial panegyrist, seems likely to succeed in any walk of literature where elegance of style and power of language are required. Sorry am I to say, that readers of the present day find such charms nearly superfluous. They turn over leaf after leaf, in search of mere story, and if that possesses some new entanglement of intrigue, or untasted spring of sorrow, few care how the narrative is told: hence the deluge of words, oddly coined, and forced into our literary currency, to the no small degradation of language—a misfortune the reviewers contribute not to cure.

“The ‘Gentleman’s Magazine for June, 1801, contained my answer to such critics as confined themselves to faults I could have helped committing,—had they been faults. Those who

merely told disagreeable truths concerning my person, or dress, or age, or such stuff, expected of course, no reply. There are innumerable press errors in the book, from my being obliged to print on new year's day, — during an insurrection of the printers. These the 'Critical Review' laid hold of with an acuteness sharpened by malignity. But if the lady who has done me so much honor by *wishing*, however imprudently, to enter on my defence, will confide her copy of 'Retrospection' to my care, I will correct it very neatly for her with my own hand, and add some notes which may contribute to her amusement.

"Mr. Piozzi says he will go back to Wales through your town, and give me an opportunity of conversing with you and with her, — a pleasure exceedingly desired by dear Doctor Thackeray's

Ever obliged and faithful

H. L. PIOZZI.

"Receive my husband's best regards, and present mine to my kind and charming friend."

Moore, who was staying at Bowood, sets down in his diary for April, 1823: "Lord L. in the evening quoted a ridiculous passage from the Preface to Mrs. Piozzi's 'Retrospections,' in which, anticipating the ultimate perfection of the human race, she says she does not despair of the time arriving when 'Vice will take refuge in the arms of impossibility.' Mentioned also an ode of hers to Posterity, beginning, 'Posterity, gregarious dame,' the only meaning of which must be, a lady *chez qui* numbers assemble, — a lady *at home*." *

Moore must have mistaken the reference; for there is no such passage in the Preface to "Retrospection." As to the ode, which I have been unable to discover, surely the term "gregarious," used in an ironical sense, is not ill-adapted to Posterity.

"I repeated," adds Moore, "what Jekyll told the other day of Bearcroft saying to Mrs. Piozzi, when Thrale, after she had repeatedly called him Mr. Beercraft: 'Beercraft is not my name, Madam; it may be your trade, but it is not my name.' It may always be questioned whether this offensive description of rep-

artee was really uttered at the time. But Bearcroft was capable of it. He began his cross-examination of Mr. Vansittart by, 'With your leave, Sir, I will call you Mr. Van for shortness.' 'As you please, Sir, and I will call you Mr. Bear.'"

Towards the end of 1795, Mrs. Piozzi left Streatham for her seat in North Wales, where (1800 or 1801) she was visited by a young nobleman, now an eminent statesman, distinguished by his love of literature and the fine arts, who has been good enough to recall and write down his impressions of her for me : —

"I did certainly know Madame Piozzi, but had no habits of acquaintance with her, and she never lived in London to my knowledge. When in my youth I made a tour in Wales — times when all inns were bad, and all houses hospitable — I put up for a day at her house, I think in Denbighshire, the proper name of which was Bryn, and to which, on the occasion of her marriage, I was told, she had recently added the name of Bella. I remember her taking me into her bedroom to show me the floor covered with folios, quartos, and octavos, for consultation, and indicating the labor she had gone through in compiling an immense volume she was then publishing called "Retrospection." She was certainly what was called, and is still called, blue, and that of a deep tint, but good-humored and lively, though affected; her husband, a quiet, civil man, with his head full of nothing but music.

"I afterwards called on her at Bath, where she chiefly resided. I remember it was at the time Madame de Staël's 'Delphine' and 'Corinne' came out*, and that we agreed in preferring 'Delphine,' which nobody reads now, to 'Corinne,' which most people read then, and a few do still. She rather avoided talking of Johnson. These are trifles, not worth recording, but I have put them down that you might not think me neglectful of your wishes; but now *j'ai vuide mon sac*."

Her mode of passing her time when she had ceased writing books, with the topics which interested her, will be best learnt from her letters. Her vivacity never left her, and the elasticity of her spirits bore up against every description of depression. Writing of a visit to Wynnstay in January, 1803, she says, 'That

* "Delphine" appeared in 1804; "Corinne," in 1806.

she arrived like an owl in the dark, and found the house a perfect warren of boys and girls, with their pa's and ma's, twelve Cunliffs, five boys and five girls, who with parent birds are most charming. Here I staid ten days, and ten more would have killed me."

It would seem that she had adopted Dr. Johnson's theory of dress for little women by this time, for a lady who met her on the way describes her as "skipping about like a kid, quite a figure of fun, in a tiger-skin shawl, lined with scarlet, and *only* five colors upon her head-dress, — on the top of a flaxen wig a bandeau of blue velvet, a bit of tiger ribbon, a white beaver hat and plume of black feathers, — as gay as a lark."

In a letter (dated Jan. 1799) to a Welsh neighbor, Mrs. Piozzi says: —

"Mr. Piozzi has lost considerably in purse, by the cruel inroads of the French in Italy, and of all his family driven from their quiet homes, has at length with difficulty saved one little boy, who is now just turned of five years old. We have got him here (Bath) since I wrote last, and his uncle will take him to school next week; for as our John has nothing but his talents and education to depend upon, he must be a scholar, and we will try hard to make him a very good one.

"My poor little boy from Lombardy said as I walked him across our market, 'These are sheeps' heads, are they not, aunt? I saw a basket of men's heads at Brescia.'

"As he was by a lucky chance baptized, in compliment to me, John Salusbury, five years ago, when happier days smiled on his family, he will be known in England by no other, and it will be forgotten he is a foreigner. A lucky circumstance for one who is intended to work his way among our islanders by talent, diligence, and education."

She thus mentions this event in "Thraliana," January 17th, 1798: —

"Italy is ruined and England threatened. I have sent for one little boy from among my husband's nephews. He was christened John Salusbury: he shall be naturalized, and then we will see whether he will be more grateful and natural and comfortable than Miss Thrales have been to the mother they have at length driven to desperation."

She could hardly have denied her husband the satisfaction of rescuing a single member of his family from the wreck ; and they were bound to provide handsomely for the child of their adoption. Whether she carried the sentiment too far, in giving him the entire estate (not a large one) is a very different question, on which she enters fearlessly in one of the fragments of the Autobiography. In a marginal note on one of the printed letters in which Johnson writes : " Mrs. Davenant says you regain your health," — she remarks : " Mrs. Davenant neither knew nor cared, as she wanted her brother Harry Cotton to marry Lady Keith, and I offered my estate with her. Miss Thrale said she wished to have nothing to do either with my family or my fortune. They were all cruel and all insulting." These fits of irritation and despondency never lasted long.

Her mode of bringing up her adopted nephew was more in accordance with her ultimate liberality, than with her early intentions or professions of teaching him to " work his way among our islanders." Instead of suffering him to travel to and from the University by coach, she insisted on his travelling post ; and she remarked to the mother of a Welsh baronet, who was similarly anxious for the comfort and dignity of her heir, " Other people's children are baked in coarse common pie-dishes, ours in patty-pans."

Before she died she had the satisfaction of seeing him sheriff of his county ; and on carrying up an address in that capacity, he was knighted and became Sir John Salusbury Piozzi Salusbury. Miss Williams Wynn has preserved a somewhat apocryphal anecdote of his disinterestedness : —

" When I read her (Mrs. P.'s) lamentations over her poverty, I could not help believing that Sir J. Salusbury had proved ungrateful to his benefactress. For the honor of human nature I rejoice to find this is not the case. When he made known to his aunt his wish to marry, she promised to make over to him the property of Brynbella. Even before the marriage was concluded she had distressed herself by her lavish expenditure at Streat-ham. I saw by the letters that Gillow's bill amounted to near £2,400, and Mr. (the late Sir John) Williams tells me she had continually very large parties from London. Sir John Salusbury

then came to her, offered to relinquish all her promised gifts and the dearest wish of his heart, saying he should be most grateful to her if she would only give him a commission in the army and let him seek his fortune. At the same time he added that he made this offer because all was still in his power, but that from the moment he married, she must be aware that it would be no longer so, that he should not feel himself justified in bringing a wife into distress of circumstances, nor in entailing poverty on children unborn.* She refused; he married; and she went on in her course of extravagance. She had left herself a life income only, and large as it was, no tradesman would wait a reasonable time for payment; she was nearly eighty; and they knew that at her death nothing would be left to pay her debts, and so they seized the goods."

When Fielding, the novelist, rather boastingly avowed that he never knew, and believed he never should know, the difference between a shilling and sixpence, he was told: "Yes, the time will come when you will know it, — when you have only eighteen pence left." If the author of "Tom Jones" could not be taught the value of money, we must not be too hard on Mrs. Piozzi for not learning it, after lesson upon lesson in the hard school of "impecuniosity." Whilst Piozzi lived, her affairs were faithfully and carefully administered. Although they built Brynbell, spent a good deal of money on Streatham, and lived handsomely, they never wanted money. He had a moderate fortune, the produce of his professional labors, and left it, neither impaired nor materially increased, to his family.

There is hardly a family of note or standing within visiting distance of their place, that has not some tradition or reminiscence to relate concerning them; and all agree in describing him as a worthy, good sort of man, obliging, inoffensive, kind to the poor, principally remarkable for his devotion to music, and utterly unable to his dying day to familiarize himself with the English language or manners. It is told of him, that being required to pay a turnpike toll near the house of a country neighbor whom he was on his way to visit, he took it for granted that

* If the estate was settled in the usual manner, he would have only a life estate; and I believe it was so settled.

the toll went into his neighbor's pocket, and proposed setting up a gate near Brynbella with the view of levying toll in his turn.

"Amongst the company," says Moore, "was Mrs. John Kemble. She mentioned an anecdote of Piozzi, who, upon calling upon some old lady of quality, was told by the servant, she was 'indifferent.' 'Is she indeed?' answered Piozzi huffishly, 'then pray tell her I can be as indifferent as she;' and walked away."*

Till he was disabled by the gout, his principal occupation was his violin, and the existing superstition of the country is that his spirit, playing on his favorite instrument, still haunts one wing of Brynbella. If he designed the building, his architectural taste does not merit the praises she lavishes on it. The exterior is not prepossessing; but there is a look of comfort about the house; the interior is well arranged: the situation, which commands a fine and extensive view of the upper part of the valley of the Clywd, is admirably chosen; the garden and grounds are well laid out; and the walks through the woods on either side, especially one called the Lovers' Walk, are remarkably picturesque. Altogether, Brynbella may be fairly held to merit the appellation of a "pretty villa." The name implies a compliment to Piozzi's country as well as to his taste; for she meant it to typify the union between Wales and Italy in his and her own proper persons.

Dr. Burney, in a letter to his daughter, thus describes the position and feelings of the couple towards each other in 1808:—

"During my invalidity at Bath, I had an unexpected visit from your Streatham friend, of whom I had lost sight for more than ten years. She still looks very well, but is graver, and can-dor itself; though she still says good things, and writes admirable notes and letters, I am told, to my granddaughters C. and M. of whom she is very fond. We shook hands very cordially, and avoided any allusion to our long separation and its cause. The *caro sposo* still lives, but is such an object from the gout that the account of his sufferings made me pity him sincerely; he wished, she told me, 'to see his old and worthy friend,' and *un beau ma-tin* I could not refuse compliance with his wish. She nurses him

* Moore's Memoirs, Vol. IV. p. 329.

with great affection and tenderness, never goes out or has company when he is in pain."

Piozzi died of gout at Brynbella in March, 1809, and was buried in a vault constructed by her desire in Drymerchion Church. There is a portrait of him (period and painter unknown) still preserved amongst the family portraits at Brynbella. It is that of a good-looking man of about forty, in a straight-cut brown coat with metal buttons, lace frill and ruffles, and some leaves of music in his hand. There are also two likenesses of Mrs. Piozzi; one a half-length (kit-kat) taken apparently when she was about forty; the other a miniature of her at an advanced age. Both confirm her description of herself as being too strong-featured to be pretty. The hands in the half-length are gloved.

Brynbella continued her headquarters till 1814, when she gave it up to Sir John Salusbury. From that period she resided principally at Bath and Clifton, occasionally visiting Streatham or making summer trips to the seaside. Her way of life after Piozzi's death may be collected from the letters, with the exception of one strange episode towards the end. When nearly eighty, she took a fancy for an actor named Conway, who came out on the London boards in 1813, and had the honor of acting Romeo and Jaffier to the Juliet and Belvidera of Miss O'Neill (Lady Becher). He also acted with her in Dean Milman's fine play, "Fazio." But it was his ill fate to reverse Churchill's famous lines:—

"Before such merits all objections fly,
Pritchard's genteel, and Garrick's six feet high."

Conway was six feet high, and a very handsome man to boot; but his advantages were purely physical; not a spark of genius animated his fine features and commanding figure, and he was battling for a moderate share of provincial celebrity, when Mrs. Piozzi fell in with him at Bath. It has been rumored in Flintshire that she wished to marry him, and offered Sir John Salusbury a large sum in ready money (which she never possessed) to give up Brynbella (which he could not give up), that she might settle it on the new object of her affections. But none of the letters or documents that have fallen in my way afford even

plausibility to the rumor, and some of the testamentary papers in which his name occurs go far towards discrediting the belief that her attachment ever went beyond admiration and friendship, expressed in exaggerated terms.

Conway threw himself overboard and was drowned in a voyage from New York to Charleston in 1828. His effects were sold at New York, and amongst them a copy of the folio edition of Young's "Night Thoughts," in which he had made a note of its having been presented to him by his "dearly attached friend, the celebrated Mrs. Piozzi." In the preface to "Love Letters of Mrs. Piozzi, Written when she was Eighty, to William Augustus Conway," published in London in 1842, it is stated that the originals, seven in number, were purchased by an American "lady," who permitted a "gentleman" to take copies and use them as he might think fit. What this "gentleman" thought fit, was to publish them with a catchpenny title and an alleged extract by way of motto to sanction it. The genuineness of the letters is doubtful, and the interpolation of three or four sentences would alter their entire tenor. But taken as they stand, their language is not warmer than an old woman of vivid fancy and sensibility might have deemed warranted by her age. *L'age n'a point de sexe*; and no one thought the worse of Madame Du Defand for the impassioned tone in which she addressed Horace Walpole, whose dread of ridicule induced him to make a most ungrateful return to her fondness. Years before the formation of this acquaintance, Mrs. Piozzi had acquired the difficult art of growing old; *je sais vieillir*: she dwells frequently but naturally on her age; she contemplates the approach of death with firmness and without self-deception; and her elasticity of spirit never for a moment suggests the image of an antiquated coquette. Of the seven letters in question, the one cited as most compromising is the sixth, in which Conway is exhorted to bear patiently the rebuff he had just received from some younger beauty: —

"Tis not a year and quarter since dear Conway, accepting of my portrait sent to Birmingham, said to the bringer, 'O, if *your lady* but retains her friendship: O, if I can but keep *her* patronage, I care not for the rest.' And now, when that friendship follows you through sickness and through sorrow; now that

her patronage is daily rising in importance: upon a lock of hair given or refused by une petite Traîtresse, hangs all the happiness of my once high-spirited and high-blooded friend. Let it not be so. EXALT THY LOVE: DEJECTED HEART, — and rise superior to such narrow minds. Do not however fancy she will ever be punished in the way you mention: no, no; she'll wither on the thorny stem, dropping the faded and ungathered leaves; — a China rose, of no good scent or flavor, — false in apparent sweetness, deceitful when depended on, — unlike the flower produced in colder climates, which is sought for in old age, preserved *even after death*, a lasting and an elegant perfume, — a medicine, too, for those whose shattered nerves require *astringent remedies*.

“And now, dear Sir, let me request of you to love yourself, and to reflect on the necessity of not dwelling on any *particular subject* too long, or too intensely. It is really very dangerous to the health of body and soul. Besides that our time here is but short; a mere preface to the great book of eternity; and 't is scarce worthy of a reasonable being not to keep the end of human existence so far in view that we may tend to it, — either directly or obliquely in every step. This is preaching, — but remember how the sermon is written at three, four, and five o'clock by an octogenary pen, — a heart (as Mrs. Lee says) twenty-six years old: and as H. L. P. feels it to be, — ALL YOUR OWN. Suffer your dear noble self to be in some measure benefited by the talents which are left *me*; your health to be restored by soothing consolations while *I remain here*, and am able to bestow them. All is not lost yet. You *have* a friend, and that friend is PROZZI.”

Conway's “high blood” was as great a recommendation to Mrs. Piozzi as his good looks, and he vindicated his claim to noble descent by his conduct, which was disinterested and gentlemanlike throughout.

Moore sets down in his Diary, April 28, 1819: “Breakfasted with the Fitzgeralds. Took me to call on Mrs. Piozzi; a wonderful old lady; faces of other times seemed to crowd over her as she sat, — the Johnsons, Reynoldses, &c., &c.: though turned eighty, she has all the quickness and intelligence of a gay young woman.”

One of the most characteristic feats or freaks of this extraordinary woman was the celebration of her eightieth birthday by a concert, ball, and supper, to between six and seven hundred people, at the Kingston Rooms, Bath, on the 27th January, 1820. At the conclusion of the supper, her health was proposed by Admiral Sir James Saumarez, and drunk with three times three. The dancing began at two, when she led off with her adopted son, Sir John Salusbury, dancing (according to the author of "Piozziana," an eyewitness) "with astonishing elasticity, and with all the true air of dignity which might have been expected of one of the best-bred females in society."

When fears were expressed that she had done too much, she replied, "No; this sort of thing is greatly in the mind; and I am almost tempted to say the same of growing old at all, especially as it regards those of the usual concomitants of age, viz. laziness, defective sight, and ill-temper."

"So far from feeling fatigued or exhausted on the following day by her exertions," remarks Sir James Fellowes, in a note on this event, "she amused us by her sallies of wit and her jokes on 'Tully's Offices,' of which her guests had so eagerly availed themselves." Tully was the cook and confectioner, the Bath Gunter, who provided the supper.

Mrs. Piozzi died in May, 1821. Her death is circumstantially communicated in the following letter;—

"Hot Wells, May 5th, 1821.

"DEAR MISS WILLOUGHBY, — It is my painful task to communicate to you, who have so lately been the kind associate of dearest Mrs. Piozzi, the irreparable loss we have all sustained in that incomparable woman and beloved friend.

"She closed her various life about nine o'clock on Wednesday, after an illness of ten days, with as little suffering as could be imagined under these awful circumstances. Her bedside was surrounded by her weeping daughters: Lady Keith and Mrs. Hoare arrived in time to be fully recognized; Miss Thrale, who was absent from town, only just before she expired, but with the satisfaction of seeing her breathe her last in peace.

"Nothing could behave with more tenderness and propriety

than these ladies, whose conduct, I am convinced, has been much misrepresented and calumniated by those who have only attended to *one* side of the history ; but may all that is past be now buried in oblivion ! Retrospection seldom improves our view of any subject. Sir John Salusbury was too distant, the close of her illness being so rapid, for us to entertain any expectation of his arriving in time to see the dear deceased.

“ He only reached Clifton late *last* night. I have not yet seen him ; my whole time has been devoted to the afflicted ladies. To you, who so well know my devoted attachment to Mrs. Piozzi, it is quite superfluous to speak of my *own* feelings, which I well know will become *more acute*, as the present hurry of business, in which we are all engaged, and the extreme bodily fatigue I have undergone, producing a sort of stupor in my mind, subsides. A scheme of rational happiness founded on dear Mrs. Piozzi’s intentions of residing at Clifton, which I had too fondly, and perhaps *foolishly*, indulged, her great age being considered, is all overthrown, and a sad and aching void will usurp the place ; but God’s will be done ! A few years more, from the apparently extraordinary vigor of her constitution, I had hoped to enjoy in her enchanting society ; these will now be passed in regret ; but *they* will also soon pass away, and all regrets will cease with *me*, as with the beloved being I must ever lament. You will probably see in the papers the last tribute I could render her of my true regard. It is highly appreciated, and warmly approved by her daughters, the most acceptable praise that can reach the heart of

“ Dear Miss Willoughby’s obedient humble servant,

“ P. S. PENNINGTON.

“ I am fatigued to death with writing, but feel a solace in addressing you. Probably you will suppose the accident to the *leg* was the cause of this sudden catastrophe ? Not at all ; it was *perfectly cured*, and the manner in which it healed, contrary to all expectation, was considered a *proof* — a fallacious one it turned out — of the purity and strength of her constitution. Inflammation in the intestines, over which medicine had no power, was the cause of her death. The accident to the leg, which in a younger subject might have produced great alarm, excited none.”

Mrs. Pennington* told a friend that Mrs. Piozzi's last words were: "I die in the trust and the fear of God." When she was attended by Sir George Gibbes, being unable to articulate, she traced a coffin in the air with her hands and lay calm. Her will and testamentary papers may help to clear up some disputed points in her biography.

The Will of Hester Lynch Piozzi, dated the 29th day of March, 1816, makes Sir John Salusbury Piozzi Salusbury heir to all her real and personal property with the exception of the following bequests:—

"To Sir James Fellowes, Two Hundred Pounds; to Mr. Alexander Leak, One Hundred Pounds; to his Son, Alexander Piozzi Leak, One Hundred Pounds; and to my maid-servant, Elizabeth Jones, One Hundred Pounds.

"Moreover, I do hereby make it my Request to the aforementioned Sir James Fellowes, that he will permit me to join his name with that of the aforesaid John Salusbury Piozzi Salusbury in the execution of these my settled purposes, and that they will cause to be duly paid my few debts and legacies, and that they will be careful to commit my body (wheresoever I may die) to the vault constructed for our remains by my second husband, Gabriel Piozzi, in Dymmerchion Church, Flintshire.

"And I do hereby nominate, constitute, and appoint the aforesaid Sir James Fellowes, and the aforesaid John Salusbury Piozzi Salusbury, Joint Executors of this my last Will and Testament, hereby revoking all former Wills by me made at any time.

"(*Signed*) HESTER LYNCH PIOZZI.

"In the presence of," &c.

"The last Will and Testament of Hester Lynch Piozzi was this day opened by us at No. 36 Crescent, Clifton, in the presence of Viscountess Keith, Mr. and Mrs. Merrick Hoare, and Miss Thrale.

"JOHN SALUSBURY PIOZZI SALUSBURY,
"JAMES FELLOWES."

"Sunday, 6th May, 1821."

* Frequently mentioned in Miss Seward's Correspondence as the beautiful and agreeable Sophia Weston.

“Memorandum. — After I had read the Will, Lady Keith and her two sisters present, said they had long been prepared for the contents and for such a disposition of the property, and they acknowledged the validity of the Will.

“JAMES FELLOWES.”

“Copy of a Letter of Requests of the late Mrs. Piozzi, dated Weston-Super-Mare, Monday, October 18th, 1819.

“MY DEAR FRIENDS AND EXECUTORS, — This is a Letter of Requests; not formally attested, but I should suppose you would nevertheless *hold it sacred*; as I only forbear making it a Codicil from a notion of disturbing a testamentary disposition so favorable to Sir John Salusbury by any awkward additions. It is then my *request* that if you find a gold repeating watch in my possession, you send it to William Augustus Conway, Esq., for whom, I bought it; *his name inside*.

“If you find a Viner’s patent alarum, give it to George Angelo Bell, for whom I bought it; *his name is inside*. My mother’s portrait, by Zoffany, should go to Lady Keith, who alone of my family can remember her; Mr. Thrale’s picture to his daughter who still bears his name. Sir James Fellowes has often promised me his assistance; I *hope* he will not at the *last moment deny* the requests of a friend he was once so partial to. I *hope* Sir John Salusbury will not consider these trifles — and my clothes to Elizabeth Bell — as any sensible diminution of what he will obtain as residuary legatee to his affectionate aunt,

“(Signed) HESTER LYNCH PIOZZI.”

Copy of a note found with the Will of the late Mrs. Piozzi:—

“Penzance, 10th October, 1820.

“MY DEAR GENTLEMEN, — Feeling unwell this evening, and full of apprehensions that I shall die before we meet again; I beg leave to request your care of a little red box deposited in my hands by Mr. Conway, last March or April; it has his name engraved in brass upon the top, *as I received it*, Miss Williams being witness; and I wrote William Augustus Conway on the bottom, to assure *him* I would keep it safe. The contents are (as he told me) of value to *him*, — letters, papers, &c. Pray be at-

tentive to them, and give him his box again untouched, as you value your *own* honor and that of your poor departed friend,

“(Signed) HESTER LYNCH PIOZZI.”

“SIR, — As one of the Executors of my late revered friend Mrs. Piozzi, I take the liberty of placing in your hands the accompanying draft (for £100), which was presented to me by that lady only two days before her death. I am very ready to acknowledge the acceptance of many acts of kindness during her *life*, but must decline appropriating to myself what I consider a *posthumous* benefaction, which more properly belongs to her heirs. Be good enough to dispose of the same as you may deem right.

“I have the honor to be, &c.

“W. A. CONWAY.

‘ Bath, May 7th, 1821.”

“York Hotel, May 8th, 1821.

“Sir James Fellowes presents his compliments to Mr. Conway and begs to acknowledge the receipt of his letter of yesterday, with its enclosure.

“Sir James hopes that Mr. Conway will be assured of his readiness to do justice to his feelings and to appreciate as he ought the handsome manner in which they have been expressed on the loss of so sincere a friend as the lamented Mrs. Piozzi.

“Sir James Fellowes will be under the painful necessity of returning to Clifton to-morrow, and will then consult with Sir John Salusbury and the relatives of the family, on the subject of Mr. Conway’s letter.”

The following correspondence was also found amongst the testamentary papers : —

“2 Upper Baker Street,
“May 23d, 1821.

“SIR, — I will not trouble you with apologies for this intrusion by an entire stranger to you, since I am well persuaded that I am writing to a gentleman and a man of honor, whose feelings will not only plead my excuse, but also advocate my request. I am informed that the papers and letters of my inestimable and lamented friend, Mrs. Piozzi, are deposited in your hands, and I

beg as a favor, that you will have the goodness to return mine to me! In the full assurance that you will kindly grant it, I have the honor to be, Sir, your

“Most obedient servant.

“S. SIDDONS.

“Sir James Fellowes, Bart., at his house,
“near Newbury, Berkshire.”

“Adbury House, near Newbury,
“May 28th, 1821.

“MADAM, — I beg to acknowledge your letter dated the 23d, and which only reached me to-day.

“Sir John Salusbury and myself were left joint executors, by my incomparable and lamented friend, Mrs. Piozzi. The whole of her valuable papers are consigned to our care, and I hope soon to be able to arrange them. For the present they are sealed up at Bath, but I shall take the earliest opportunity of informing Sir John, when we meet, of your request, and I am persuaded he will be desirous of partaking with me the pleasure of attending to any wish expressed by Mrs. Siddons. I have the honor to be, Madam, with great respect, your most obedient servant,

“JAMES FELLOWES.

“To Mrs. Siddons.”

One of her letters has been retained, and no one can be hurt by its being printed.

(No date; postmark, Paddington, April 24, 1815.)

“MY DEAR FRIEND, — You were always kind and good to me, and I thank you most sincerely for this last proof of your affection. My affliction is deep indeed, but I do not sorrow as those who have no hope. I doubt not that Almighty wisdom and goodness orders all things for the ultimate happiness of his servants; and my grief for the loss of my dear and ever dutiful and affectionate son is greatly alleviated in the humble hope that his exemplary virtues will find acceptance at the Throne of Mercy, through the mediation of our blessed Saviour. This third stroke has nevertheless sadly shaken me. ‘I cannot but remember such things were, and were most precious to me.’

"So strange and unlooked for are all things around us, that the only good thing we can reckon upon with any certainty in this world, is *that one is far advanced upon one's journey to a better*. I am, my dear friend,

"Your faithfully affectionate

"S. SIDDONS.

"To Mrs. Piozzi, Bath."

In any endeavor to solve the difficult problem of Mrs. Piozzi's conduct and character, it should be kept in view that the highest testimony to her worth has been volunteered by those with whom she passed the last years of her life in the closest intimacy. She had become completely reconciled to Madame D'Arblay, with whom she was actively corresponding when she died, and her mixed qualities of head and heart are thus summed up in that lady's Diary, May, 1821 : —

"I have lost now, just lost, my once most dear, intimate, and admired friend, Mrs. Thrale Piozzi, who preserved her fine faculties, her imagination, her intelligence, her powers of allusion and citation, her extraordinary memory, and her almost unexampled vivacity, to the last of her existence. She was in her eighty-second year, and yet owed not her death to age nor to natural decay, but to the effects of a fall in a journey from Penzance to Clifton. On her eightieth birthday she gave a great ball, concert, and supper, in the public rooms at Bath, to upwards of two hundred persons, and the ball she opened herself. She was, in truth, a most wonderful character for talents and eccentricity, for wit, genius, generosity, spirit, and powers of entertainment.

"She had a great deal both of good and not good, in common with Madame de Staël Holstein. They had the same sort of highly superior intellect, the same depth of learning, the same general acquaintance with science, the same ardent love of literature, the same thirst for universal knowledge, and the same buoyant animal spirits, such as neither sickness, sorrow, nor even terror, could subdue. Their conversation was equally luminous, from the sources of their own fertile minds, and from their splendid acquisitions from the works and acquirements of others.

Both were zealous to serve, liberal to bestow, and graceful to oblige; and both were truly high-minded in prizing and praising whatever was admirable that came in their way. Neither of them was delicate nor polished, though each was flattering and caressing; but both had a fund inexhaustible of good-humor, and of sportive gayety, that made their intercourse with those they wished to please attractive, instructive, and delightful; and though not either of them had the smallest real malevolence in their compositions, neither of them could ever withstand the pleasure of uttering a repartee, let it wound whom it might, even though each would serve the very person they goaded with all the means in their power. Both were kind, charitable, and munificent, and therefore beloved; both were sarcastic, careless, and daring, and therefore feared. The morality of Madame de Staël was by far the most faulty, but so was the society to which she belonged; so were the general manners of those by whom she was encircled."

There is one real point of similarity between Madame de Staël and Mrs Piozzi, which has been omitted in the parallel. Both were treated much in the same manner by the amiable, sensitive, and unsophisticated Fanny Burney. In Feb. 1793, she wrote to her father, then at Paris, to announce her intimacy with a small "colony" of distinguished emigrants settled at Richmond, the cynosure of which was the far-famed daughter of Necker. He writes to caution her, on the strength of a suspicious *liaison* with M. de Narbonne. She replies by declaring her belief that the charge is a gross calumny. "Indeed, I think you could not spend a day with them and not see that their commerce is that of pure, but exalted and most elegant friendship. I would, nevertheless, give the world to avoid being a guest under their roof, now that I have heard even the shadow of such a rumor."

If Mr. Croker was right,* she was then in her forty-second year; at all events, no tender, timid, delicate maiden, ready to start at a hint or semblance of impropriety; and she waived her scruples without hesitation when they stood in the way of her

* I have heard that an elder daughter of Dr. Burney, who died before the birth of the authoress, was also christened Frances, and that it was the register of her baptism to which Mr. Croker triumphantly appealed.

intercourse with M. D'Arblay, to whom she was married in July 1793, he being then employed in transcribing Madame de Staël's Essay on the Influence of the Passions.

As to the proposed parallel, with all due deference to Madame D'Arblay's proved sagacity, aided by her personal knowledge of her two gifted friends, it may be suggested that they presented fewer points of resemblance than any two women of at all corresponding celebrity. The superiority in the highest qualities of mind will be awarded without hesitation to the Frenchwoman, although M. Thiers terms her writings the perfection of mediocrity. She grappled successfully with some of the weightiest and subtlest questions of social and political science; in criticism, she displayed powers which Schlegel might have envied while he aided their fullest development in her "Germany;" and her "Corinne" ranks amongst the best of those works of fiction which excel in description, reflection, and sentiment, rather than in pathos, fancy, stirring incident, or artfully contrived plot. But her tone of mind was so essentially and notoriously masculine, that when she asked Talleyrand whether he had read her "Delphine," he answered, "Non, Madame, mais on m'a dit que nous y sommes tous les deux déguisés en femmes."* This was a material drawback on her agreeability; in a moment of excited consciousness, she exclaimed, that she would give all her fame for the power of fascinating; and there was no lack of bitterness in her celebrated repartee to the man who, seated between her and Madame Recamier, boasted of being between Wit and Beauty, "Oui, et sans posséder ni l'un ni l'autre."† The view from Richmond Park she called "calme et animée, ce qu'on doit être, et que je ne suis pas."

In London she was soon voted a bore by the wits and people

* "To understand the point of this answer," says Mr. Mackintosh, "it must be known that an old countess is introduced in the novel full of cunning, finessing, and trick, who was intended to represent Talleyrand, and Delphine was intended for herself." — *Life of Sir James Mackintosh*, Vol. II. p. 453.

† This *mot* is given to Talleyrand in Lady Holland's Life of Sidney Smith. But it may be traced to one mentioned by Hannah More in 1787, as then current in Paris. One of the *notables* fresh from his province was teased by two *petits maîtres* to tell them who he was. "Eh bien donc, le voici: je suis ni sot ni fat, mais je suis entre les deux." — *Memoirs of Hannah More*, Vol. II. p. 57.

of fashion. She thought of convincing whilst they thought of dining. Sheridan and Brummell delighted in mystifying her. Byron complained that she was always talking of himself or herself,* and concludes his account of a dinner-party by the remark: "But we got up too soon after the women; and Mrs. Corinne always lingers so long after dinner, that we wish her—in the drawing-room." In another place he says: "I saw Curran presented to Madame de Staël at Mackintosh's; it was the grand confluence between the Rhone and the Saône, and they were both so d—d ugly that I could not help wondering how the best intellects of France and England could have taken up respectively such residences." He afterwards qualifies this opinion: "Her figure was not bad; her legs tolerable; her arms good: altogether I can conceive her having been a desirable woman, allowing a little imagination for her soul, and so forth. She would have made a great man."

This is just what Mrs. Piozzi never would have made. Her mind, despite her masculine acquirements, was thoroughly feminine: she had more tact than genius, more sensibility and quickness of perception than depth, comprehensiveness, or continuity of thought. But her very discursiveness prevented her from becoming wearisome; her varied knowledge supplied an inexhaustible store of topics and illustrations; her lively fancy placed them in attractive lights; and her mind has been well likened to a kaleidoscope which, whenever its glittering and heterogeneous contents are moved or shaken, surprises by some new combination of color or of form. She professed to write as she talked; but her conversation was doubtless better than her books; her main advantages being a well-stored memory, fertility of images, aptness of allusion, and *apropos*.

In the course of his famous definition or description of wit, Barrow says: "Sometimes it lieth in pat allusion to a known story, or in seasonable application of a trivial saying: sometimes it playeth in words and phrases, taking advantage from the ambiguity of their sense or the affinity of their sound." If this be so, she possessed it in abundance. In a letter dated Bath, 26th

* Johnson told Boswell: "You have only two topics, yourself and myself, and I am heartily sick of both."

April, 1818, — about the time when Talleyrand said of Lady F. S.'s robe: "*Elle commence trop tard et finit trop tôt*," — she writes: —

"A genteel young clergyman, in our Upper Crescent, told his mamma, about ten days ago, that he had lost his heart to pretty Miss Prideaux, and that he must absolutely marry her or die. *La chère mère* of course replied gravely: 'My dear, you have not been acquainted with the lady above a fortnight; let me recommend you to see more of her.' 'More of her!' exclaimed the lad, 'why, I have seen down to the fifth rib on each side already.' This story will serve to convince Captain T. Fellowes and yourself, that as you have always acknowledged the British Belles to *exceed* those of every other nation, you may now say with truth, that they *outstrip* them."

On the 1st July, 1818: —

"The heat has certainly exhausted my faculties, and I have but just life enough left to laugh at the fourteen tailors who, united under a flag with '*Liberty and Independence*' on it, went to vote for some of these gay fellows, I forget which, but the motto is ill-chosen, said I, they should have written up, '*Measures, not Men.*'"

Her piety was genuine; and old-fashioned politicians, whose watchword is Church and King, will be delighted with her politics. Literary men, considering how many curious inquiries depend upon her accuracy, will be more anxious about her truthfulness, and I have had ample opportunities of testing it; having not only been led to compare her statements with those of others, but to collate her own statements of the same transactions or circumstances at distant intervals or to different persons. It is difficult to keep up a large correspondence without frequent repetition. Sir Walter Scott used to write precisely the same things to three or four fine-lady friends, and Mrs. Piozzi could no more be expected to find a fresh budget of news or gossip for each epistle than the author of "*Waverley*." Thus, in 1815, she writes to a Welsh baronet from Bath: —

"We have had a fine Dr. Holland here.* He has seen and

* Sir Henry Holland, Bart., who, with many other titles to distinction, is one of the most active and enterprising of modern travellers.

written about the Ionian Islands ; and means now to practise as a physician, exchanging the Cyclades, say we wits and wags, for the Sick Ladies. We made quite a lion of the man. I was invited to every house he visited at for the last three days ; so I got the *Queue du lion* despairing of *le Cœur*."

Two other letters, written about the same time, contain the same piece of intelligence and the same joke. She was very fond of writing marginal notes ; and after annotating one copy of a book, would take up another and do the same.* I have rarely detected a substantial variation in her narratives, even in those which were more or less dictated by pique ; and as she constantly drew upon the "Thraliana" for her materials, this, having been carefully and calmly compiled, affords an additional guaranty for her accuracy.

She sometimes gives anecdotes about authors. Thus, in the letter just quoted, she says : "Lord Byron protests his wife was a fortune without money, a belle without beauty, and a blue-stocking without either wit or learning." But her literary information grew scanty as she grew old ; and her opinions of the rising authors are principally valuable as indications of the obstacles which nascent reputations must overcome. "Pindar's fine remark respecting the different effects of music on different characters holds equally true of genius : so many as are not delighted by it, are disturbed, perplexed, irritated. The beholder either recognizes it as a projected form of his own being, that moves before him with a glory round its head, or recoils from it as a spectre."† The octogenarian critic of the Johnsonian school recoils from "Frankenstein" as from an incarnation of the Evil Spirit : she does not know what to make of the "Tales of My Landlord ;" and she inquires of an Irish acquaintance whether she retained recollection enough of her own country to be entertained with "that strange caricature, Castle Rack Rent." Contemporary judgments such as these (not more extravagant than Horace Walpole's) are to the historian of literature what fossil remains are to the geologist.

* A copy of Boswell's Life of Johnson, annotated by her like Dr. Wellesley's, is in the possession of Mr. Bohn, the eminent publisher.

† Coleridge, "Aids to Reflections."

Although perhaps no biographical sketch was ever executed, as a labor of love, without an occasional attack of what Lord Macaulay calls the *Lues Boswelliana*, or fever of admiration, I hope it is unnecessary for me to say that I am not setting up Mrs. Piozzi as a model letter-writer, or an eminent author, or a pattern of the domestic virtues, or a fitting object of hero or heroine worship in any capacity. All I venture to maintain is, that her life and character, if only for the sake of the "associate forms," deserve to be vindicated against unjust reproach, and that she has written many things which are worth snatching from oblivion or preserving from decay.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIRS.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIRS.

“THE circumstances,” says Sir James Fellowes, “under which she was induced to write them, were purely accidental. During the last fifty years of her life, she had made a collection of pocket-books, in which it was her constant practice to write down her conversations and anecdotes, as well as her remarks upon the recent publications. They were tied together and carefully preserved; and on one occasion Mrs. Piozzi, pointing to them, observed to me: ‘These you will one day have to look over with Salusbury (my co-executor), together with the ‘Thraliana;’ I have never had courage to open them, but to your honor and joint care I shall leave them.’ These memoranda would no doubt form a literary curiosity. At the time the conversation took place at Bath on this interesting topic, I urged Mrs. Piozzi to write down some reminiscences of her own times, and some of those amusing anecdotes I had heard her relate, and which have never been published, adding to my request the value they would be to posterity and the obligation conferred upon myself. It was her nature to be grateful for any trifling act of kindness, and as I had the good fortune to possess her friendship and favorable opinion, she indulged my curiosity to learn her history by presenting me with this sketch of her life (O, she wrote expressly for me), as the strongest proof (she observed) of her confidence and esteem. These are the facts connected with the ‘Autobiographical Memoirs.’”

The author of “Piozziana” says: “I called on her one day, and at an early hour by her desire; when she showed me a heap of what are termed pocket-books, and said she was sorely

embarrassed upon a point, upon which she condescended to say she would take my advice. 'You see in that collection,' she continued, 'a diary of mine of more than *fifty* years of my life I have scarcely omitted anything which occurred to me during the time I have mentioned. My books contain the conversation of every person of almost every class with whom I have had intercourse; my remarks on what was said; downright facts and scandalous *on dits*; personal portraits and anecdotes of the characters concerned; criticisms on the publications and authors of the day, &c. Now I am approaching the grave, and am agitated by doubts as to what I should do, — whether to burn my manuscripts or to leave them to futurity. Thus far my decision is to destroy my papers. Shall I or shall I not?' I took the freedom of saying, 'By no means do an act which done cannot be amended; keep your papers safe from prying eyes, and at least trust them to the discretion of survivors.'"

The heap of pocket-books must have been a very large heap, for a diary so kept would require at least one a week. "Thraliana," now in the possession of the Rev. G. A. Salusbury (the eldest son of Sir John Salusbury), is contained in six books, of about 300 pages each, and extends over thirty-two years and a half. The first entry is in these words: "It is many years since Doctor Samuel Johnson advised me to get a little book and write in it all the little anecdotes which might come to my knowledge, all the observations I might make or hear, all the verses never likely to be published, and, in fine, everything that struck me at the time. Mr. Thrale has now treated me with a repository, and provided it with the pompous title of 'Thraliana.' I must endeavor to fill it with nonsense new and old. — 15th September, 1776." The last: "30th March, 1809. — Everything most dreaded has ensued. . . . All is over, and my second husband's death is the last thing recorded in my first husband's present. Cruel Death!"

HER STORY OF HER LIFE.

I HEARD it asserted once in a mixt company that few men of ever so good a family could recollect, immediately on being challenged, the maiden names of their four great-grandmothers: they were not Welshmen. My father's two grandames were Bridget Percival, daughter to a then Lord Egmont, and Mary Pennant of Downing, great aunt to the great naturalist. My mother claimed Hester Salusbury, heiress of Llewenny Hall, as one of *her* grandmothers by marriage with Sir Robert Cotton; Vere Herbert, only daughter of Lord Torington, was the other.

The Salusbury pedigree is, indeed, perpetually referred to by Pennant in the course of his numerous volumes. It begins, I remember, with Adam de Saltzburg, son to Alexander, Duke and Prince of Bavaria, who came to England with the Conqueror, and in 1070 had obtained for his valor a faire house in Lancashire, still known by name of Saltsbury Court. I showed an abstract of it to the Heralds in office at Saltzbourg, when there; and they acknowledged me a true descendant of their house, offering me all possible honors, to the triumphant delight of dear Piozzi, for whose amusement alone I pulled out the schedule. You will find a modest allusion to the circumstance in page 283 of the Travel Book, 2d volume.*

Among my immediate ancestors, third, fourth, or fifth, I forget which, from this *Father Adam*, was Henry Salusbury surnamed the Black; who having taken three noble Saracens with his own hand in the first Crusade, Cœur de Lion knighted him on the

* "There is a Benedictine convent seated on the top of a hill above the town (Saltzbourg), under which lie its founders and protectors, the old dukes of Bavaria, which they are happy to shew travellers, with the registered account of their young prince Adam, who came over to our island with William, and gained a settlement. They were pleased when I observed to them that his blood was not yet wholly extinct amongst us." — *Observations and Reflections, &c.* This quotation is added by the Editor, and all notes and references, not expressly mentioned as by others, are by him.

field, and to the old Bavarian Lion (see "Retrospection," p. 116) which adorned his shield, added three crescents for coat armor. On his return the king permitted him to settle, where he married — in Wales. He built Llewenny Hall, naming it Llew, — the Lion, and an ny, — for us; and set a brazen one upon its highest tower.

Among our popular Cambrian ballads, is one to the honor of this hero; still known to the harpers by name of Black Sir Harry. The civil wars of York and Lancaster called into public notice an immediate descendant of this warrior. His name, which also was *Henry*, stood recorded on a little obelisk, or rather cippus, by the road-side at Barnet, where the great battle was fought; so long, that I remember my father taking me out of the carriage to read it when I was quite a child. He had shewn mercy to an enemy on that occasion, who looking on his device or imprese, flung himself at his feet with these words: —

Sat est prostrasse Leoni.

Our family have used that Leggenda as motto to the coat armor ever since.*

I guess not why this man was a Yorkist. The other party was natural to the inhabitants of North Wales, where the proud Duke of Somerset had married a daughter of his to the son of Owen Tudor by the Princess Katherine of France; another of whose sons, Fychan Tudor de Beraine, married *his* son to Jasper the Earl of Pembroke's daughter.† These were immediate parents to the father of Katherine de Berayne by Constance d'Aubigné, Dame d'Honneur to Anne de Bretagne. She brought him this one only child, an *heiress* who was ward to Queen Elizabeth, and in her fifteenth year married, with her Majesty's consent, to Sir John Salusbury,‡ of Llewenny Hall, eldest of fourteen children. After his demise fair Katherine gave her hand to Sir Richard Clough, the splendid merchant, mentioned in a note to "Retrospection," ‡ whose daughter inherited Bachygraig, and married Roger Salusbury, youngest brother of Sir John, first

* See "British Synonymy," Vol. II. p. 218. — *Mrs. P.*

† See "Retrospection," Vol. I. p. 446. — *Mrs. P.*

‡ Vol. II. p. 155.

husband to her mother. He quarrelling with the House of Llewenny, tore down the Lion and set it on his wife's seat called Bachygraig, where it stood, newly gilt by Mr. Piozzi, two years ago (1813).

My father was lineally descended from this pair, and died possessed of dear old Bachygraig, while Sir John Salusbury's family soon finished in a daughter Hester, who, marrying Sir Robert Cotton of Combermere, gave him, and all her progeny by him, the name of Salusbury Cotton. She was immediate grandame to my dear mother; and thus in your little friend the two families remain united.

Will it amuse you to be told that Katherine de Berayne, after Sir Richard Clough's death, married Maurice Wynne, of Gwydir, whose family and fortune merged in that of the Berties? He was not, however, her last husband. She wedded Thelwall, of Plasyward, after she was quite an old woman. But the Berayne estate she left to my mother's great-grandfather, as heir to her first husband, Sir John Salusbury of Llewenny. My uncle sold it to Lord Kirkwall's father.*

But it will bring matters nearer home to tell you that my mother, who had £10,000, an excellent fortune in those days, besides an annuity for her mamma's life of £125 per annum, who was living gayly with her brother, Sir Robert Salusbury Cotton, and his wife, Lady Betty Tollemache, refused all suitors attracted by her merits and beauty for love of her rakish cousin, John Salusbury of Bachygraig. He, unchecked by care of a father, who died during the infancy of his sons, ran out the estate completely to nothing. So completely that the £10,000 would scarcely pay debts and furnish them out a cottage in Caernarvonshire, where — after two or three dead things — I was born alive, and where they were forced by circumstances to remain, till my grandmother Lucy Salusbury — an exemplary creature — should die, and leave them free at least to mortgage or to sell,

* Lord Kirkwall sold the property to the Rev. Edward Hughes, whose son, William Lewis Hughes, the present possessor, was created Baron Dinorben, in 1831, of Kinnel Park, Denbighshire. The house was burnt down in 1840. — *Sir J. F.* Lord Dinorben was succeeded in his estates by his nephew, Hugh Robert Hughes, Esq.

or to do *something* towards reinstating themselves in a less unbecoming situation.

Meanwhile *I* was their joint plaything, and although education was a word then unknown as applied to females, they had taught me to read and speak and think and translate from the French, till I was half a prodigy; and my father's brother Thomas, who was bred up for the ecclesiastical courts with poor papa's money, and who lived in London among the gay and great, said how *his* friends, the Duke of Leeds, Lord Halifax, &c., would be delighted could they but see little Hester. My mother, however, thought it would be best to conciliate her own relations, and made *me*, I know not at how early an age, write a letter to my Uncle Robert, who had lately lost Lady Betty. The scheme prospered: grand-mamma Salusbury of Bachygraig was dead, and Sir Robert Salusbury Cotton said he longed to kiss his sister and the little girl; to whom he was perhaps more willing to attach himself, as he had no progeny, and his only brother had married, not much to please *him*, a portionless cousin of his own; Miss Cotton, of Etwall and Belleport, by whom he had many children, among which two only were favorites at Llewenny. An invitation followed, and we came to the *Old Hall* hung round with armor, which struck my infant eyes with wonder and delight.

My uncle soon began to dote on Fiddle, as he called me in fondness; and I certainly did not obtain his love by flattery, as I remember well this odd *tête-à-tête* conversation:—

"Come now, dear," said he, "that we are quite alone, tell me what you expected to see here at Llewenny." "I expected," replied I, "to see an old baronet." "Well, in *that* your expectation is not much disappointed; but why did you think of such stuff?" "Why just because papa and mamma was always saying to me and to one another 'at Bodvel, what the old baronet would think of this and that: they did it to frighten me I see now; but I thought to myself that kings and princes were but men, and God made *them* you know, Sir, and *they* made old baronets." "Incomparable Fiddle," exclaimed my uncle; "you will see a Mr. and Mrs. Clough at dinner to-day; do you know how to spell Clough?" "No," was the reply; "I never heard the name; but if it had been spelt like *buff*, you would not have

have asked me the question. They write it perhaps as we write *enough* — c, l, o, u, g, h.”

What baby anecdotes are these, you cry. ’Tis so, but your poor friend certainly ceased being in any wise a wonder after she was five years old, at which period we left Wales and came to my uncle’s house in Albemarle Street, where he told my mother he should follow in less than two months; make a new will, and leave poor Fiddle £10,000, having understood that my parents had by their marriage settlement agreed to entail the old Bachy-graig Estate on Thomas Salusbury, brother to papa, and then a doctor in the Commons; and on *his* sons, rather than their own daughter, if they had no male heir. I fancy some rough words passed concerning this. My uncle certainly but ill brooked my father’s pride, and he still less willingly endured being informed that, if his quality friends would provide *him* some distant establishment, my mother and myself should share the old baronet’s fortune. “No, no, Sir Robert,” was the haughty answer, “if I go for a soldier, *your* sister shall carry the knapsack, and the little wench may have what I can work for.” I have heard that our parting soon followed this conversation, and scarce were my infantine tears dried for leaving dear Llewenny and my half-adored uncle, before the news reached London of his sudden death by an apoplectic fit; in consequence of which his brother, Sir Lynch Salusbury Cotton, came into everything by a temporary will kept in case of accidents till one more copious and correct should be formed.

Some traces yet remain upon my mind of poor mamma’s anguish and of my father’s violent expressions. She has related to me his desperate engagement with some quacks and projectors who pretended to find lead on his encumbered estate, whilst *we* remained in town, and I became a favorite with the Duke and Duchess of Leeds, where I recollect often meeting the famous actor Mr. Quin, who taught me to speak Satan’s speech to the sun in “Paradise Lost.” When they took me to see him act Cato, I remember making him a formal courtesy, much to the Duchess’s amusement, perhaps to that of the player. I was just six years old, and we sat in the stage-box, where I kept on studying the part with all my little power, not at all distracted

by the lights or company, which they fancied would take my attention. The fireworks for the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle were the next sights my fancy was impressed with. We sat on a terrace belonging to the Hills of Tern, — now Lord Berwick's family, — and David Garrick was there, and made me sit on his lap, feeding me with cates, &c.; because, having asked some one who sat near why they called those things that blew up, *Gerbes* in the bill of fare, I answered, "Because they are like wheat-sheaves, you see, and Gerbe is a wheat-sheaf in French."

When Garrick was intimate at Streatham Park more than twenty years afterwards, he did not like that story: it made him look older, at least *feel* older than he wished, I suppose.

Lord Halifax was now, or soon after, head of the Board of Trade, and wished to immortalize his name — he had no sons — by colonizing Nova Scotia. Cornwallis and my father, whom he patronized, were sent out, the *first persons* in every sense of the word; and poor dear mamma was left *sine pane* (almost, I believe), certainly *sine nummo*, with her odd little charge, a girl without a guinea, whose mind however she ceased not to cultivate in every possible manner. For French, writing, and arithmetic I had no instructor but herself; and when she went from home where I could not be taken, my temporary abode was the great school in Queen Square, where Mrs. Dennis and her brother, the Admiral Sir Peter Dennis, said I was qualified, at eight years old, for teacher rather than learner; and he actually did instruct me in the rudiments of navigation, as the globes were already familiar to me. The small-pox, however, and measles interrupted my studies for a while, when my Grandmother Cotton invited my mother and myself to spend a summer in Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire, where she had a fine country-seat called East Hyde, not far from Luton, to which I made reference in "Retrospection" (Vol. II. p. 434). This lady, daughter to Sir Thomas Lynch, after whom I was named, had possessed an immense fortune in Jamaica; but being left an orphan at five years old, was, as she always said, and I believe, purchased of Lord Torington, her mother's brother, by Sir Robert Salusbury Cotton for his son Thomas, the child he educated himself in the Tower

of London, when confined there on account of his correspondence with the Electress Sophia.*

Certain it is that Lady Cotton was scarce fifteen years older than her own eldest son, my dear Uncle Robert, husband of Lady Betty Tollemache; which she considered as little to the honor of her father-in-law, who, she believed, obtained her fortune to his family by any means he could.

She had made a second choice when left a widow at thirty-seven years old, with many children, all mortally offended at her marrying again; but Captain King was dead, and they were reconciled at the time I am speaking of. At East Hyde I learned to love horses; and when my mother hoped I was gaining health by the fresh air, I was kicking my heels on a corn-binn, and learning to drive of the old coachman; who, like everybody else, small and great, delighted in taking me for a pupil. Grandmamma kept four great ramping war-horses, *chevaux entiers*, for her carriage, with immense long manes and tails, which we buckled and combed; and when, after long practice, I showed her and my mother how two of them (poor Colonel and Peacock) would lick my hand for a lump of sugar or fine white bread, much were they amazed; much more when my skill in guiding them round the court-yard on the break could no longer be doubted or denied, though strictly prohibited for the future.

* Sir William Wraxall, in his Historical Memoirs (Vol. I. p. 304), in reference to the adventures of the Stuart family, relates an extraordinary anecdote about the destroying of the correspondence of the Electress Sophia with the Court of St. Germain. "It ought not to surprise us (he says) on full consideration that *Sophia* should feel the warmest attachment to James the Second." On this Mrs. Piozzi remarks in the margin: "It surprises *me* because my own great-grandfather was put into the Tower for corresponding with the Electress, by James the Second; and, being permitted to have any *one* of his family with him, chose a little boy, whom he taught to read and write there. My great-grandmother used to walk on Tower Hill till she saw her husband's signal poked out of some grated window. She was, by birth, Hester Salusbury, of Llewenny, and married to Sir Robert Cotton, of Combermere. I have seen, when a child, some of the Electress's letters signed Sophia. I remember nothing of them, but my uncle said they were full of Latin quotations: his son, father to Lord Combermere, burned them. I have looked in Lord Orford's miscellaneous works, and perceive that he and my friend Wraxall are of a mind about Sophia, of whose letters I can recollect only the odd signature, writing her name with a long *f*; but my cousin was a strange fellow, to throw them into the fire."

Among our Hertfordshire neighbors was Sir Henry Penrice, Judge of the Admiralty, who by the heiress of that branch of the Spencer family had only one daughter, the all-accomplished Anna Maria, who sought my mother's friendship the more eagerly, as she felt her heart daily more and more attached to my father's brother, Doctor Thomas Salusbury, of the Commons. My resemblance to my papa's whole family fixed me a favorite. My mother thought herself ill-used by them, and so in fact she was ; her husband having left his brother a power of attorney to do everything for him, and he neglecting all mamma's entreaties, having forbore to change the hands of a mortgage upon that portion of the Welsh estate appointed for her jointure. Worse than *that* : my mother had scraped up, by dint of miserable privations, money for the purpose ; but Uncle Thomas neglected his absent brother's interest, and the estate was lost. Love was, however, *his* apology ; and a faint hope, perhaps, that so immense a fortune as that of Miss Penrice might in some wise and on some future day benefit her child, hushed all mamma's complaints. The lovers married. Sir Henry died, and was succeeded by his son-in-law, both in his place, his title, and his estate.

My father had meanwhile, I fear, behaved perversely, quarrelling and fighting duels, and fretting his friends at home. My mother and my uncle, taking advantage of his last gloomy letter, begged him to return and share the gayeties of Offley Place, mentioned in "Retrospection," Vol. I. p. 213 : likewise, if I remember rightly, in the Travel Book (Vol. II.), where I recollect the plains of Kalin reminding me of our dear airings upon Lily Hoo, — the common near our house, joining to that of Offley, — scenes I shall see no more !

Here I reigned long, a fondled favorite. Kind Lady Salusbury felt her health decline, but told her husband she should die more happily, persuaded that he would not marry, as he was so attached to the good girl she now considered as her own, having nearly lost her precious life by a severe miscarriage. She, however, lived with him nine years, and said it were pity I should not learn Latin, Italian, and even Spanish, in all which she was conversant. Study was my delight, and such a patroness would have made stones students.

The Lisbon earthquake had impressed her strongly ; and my mother, who was particularly fond of Spanish literature, made me translate a sermon in that language, written and preached in the Jewish synagogue at London by Isaac Netto, — whose name is all I can bring back to mind, — and dedicate it to my dear aunt, Anna Maria Salusbury. A set of pearl and garnet ornaments, which I gave afterwards to Lady Keith, was my shining recompense ; but such was my father's conduct, she never did love *him*. My mother she respected, and dear Doctor Collier, a constant guest, did all he could to keep us all happy in one another. Felicity, in this world, however, lasts not long. Poor Lady Salusbury died, at forty-one years old, of dropsy in the breast, and uncle *said* he had no kindness but for me. I think *I* did share his fondness with his stud ; our stable was the first for hunters of enormous value, — for racers, too ; and our house, after my aunt's death, was even *haunted* by young men who made court to the niece, and expressed admiration of the horses. Every suitor was made to understand my extraordinary value. Those who could read, were shown my verses ; those who could not, were judges of my prowess in the field. It was my sport to mimic some, and drive others back, in order to make Dr. Collier laugh, who did not perhaps *wish* to see me give a heart away which he held completely in his hand, since he kindly became my preceptor in Latin, logic, rhetoric, &c.

We began, I think, before I was thirteen years old. On the day I was sixteen he confessed sixty-four, I remember, and said he was just four times my age, so I suppose he was. The difference or agreement never crossed my mind, nor seemed to have crossed his. A friendship more tender, or more unpolluted by interest or by vanity, never existed ; love had no place at all in the connection, nor had he any rival but my *mother*. *Their* influence was of the same kind, and hers the strongest ; but it was not till after poor papa's death that I observed she looked on Collier with a jealous eye. We were scarce *all* of us enough to manage with my father's red-hot temper. It was daily endangering our alienation of Sir Thomas Salusbury's fondness, which the arrival of a new neighbor put still more to hazard. We should have made home more agreeable.

My uncle would not then have run to the smiling widow of Wellbury — just at our Park gate — the Honorable Mrs. King, whose blandishments drew him from dear Offley, and made our removal to our London House less painful. The summer before this removal had produced to *me* a new vexation. Lord Halifax was become lieutenant of Ireland, and my father made one of his numerous escort, delighting to attend his patron through his own country, and show him the wonders of Wales. Mamma and I remained at Offley doing the honors. Doctor Collier was in London upon business. My uncle had been to town for a night or two, and returned to tell us what an excellent, what an incomparable young man he had seen, who was, in short, a model of perfection, ending his panegyric by saying that he was a *real sportsman*. Seeing me disposed to laugh, he looked very grave; said he expected us to like him, and that seriously. The next day Mr. Thrale followed his eulogist, and applied himself so diligently to gain my mother's attention — ay, and her heart too, — that there was little doubt of her approving the pretensions of so very showy a suitor, — if suitor he was to *me*, who certainly had not a common share in the compliments he paid to my mother's wit, beauty, and elegance.

His father, he said, was born in our village of Offley, of mean parents, but had made a prodigious fortune by his merits; and the people all looked with admiration at his giving 5s. to a poor boy who lay on the bank, because he was sure his father had been such a boy. In a week's time the country caught the notion up that Miss Salusbury's husband had been suddenly found by meeting Sir Thomas at the house of Mr. Levinz, a well-known *bon vivant* of those days, — they were not then called amphytrions, — who kept a gay house and a gay lady at Brompton, where he entertained the gay fashionists of 1760. The chaplain of Offley Place, a distant relation of ours, — uncle I think to this Sir Robert Salusbury whom we met once in Park Street (Bath), — having undisclosed hopes of his own to get the heiress, not only took alarm, but cunningly conveyed that alarm to my father, who, when he came home, said he saw his girl already half disposed of without his consent, and swore I should not be exchanged for a barrel of porter, &c.

Vain were all my assurances that nothing resembled love *less* than Mr. Thrale's behavior: vain my promises that no step on my part should be taken without his concurrence; although I clearly understood, and wrote Dr. Collier word so, that my uncle made this marriage the condition of his favor quite apparently, and that certain ruin would follow my rejection. The letter, perhaps, still exists in which I declared my resolution to adhere to the maxims of filial duty *he* had taught me, and refuse (when I should be asked) any offer, however tempting, that should seek to seduce me from *his* authority, under which both myself and my mother were placed. By this time the brothers quarrelled and met no more. My father took us to London. My uncle solaced himself with visiting the widow; and after a miserable winter, which visits from Mr. Thrale — to my mother — rendered terrifying to *me* every day, from papa's violence of temper, a note came, sent in a sly manner, from Dr. Collier, to tell me (it was written in Latin) that Sir Thomas would certainly marry Mrs. King the Sunday following, and begged I would not say a syllable till the next day, when *he* would come and break the dreadful tidings to my father.

My countenance, however, showed, or his acuteness discovered, something he did not like; an accusation followed, that I received clandestine letters from Mr. Thrale, a circumstance I had every just reason to deny, and felt extremely hurt, of course, at seeing myself disbelieved. After a fruitless and painful contest for many hours of this cruel evening, my spirits sunk, I fainted, and my father, gaining possession of the fatal billet, had to ask *my* pardon, — poor unhappy soul! and in this fond misery spent we the hours till four o'clock in the morning. At nine we rose; he to go across the park in search of my maternal uncle, Sir Lynch Salusbury Cotton, from whom, and from Dr. Crane, Prebendary of Westminster, he meant to seek counsel and comfort. Me, to the employment of calling our medical friend, Herbert Lawrence, to dinner by a billet of earnest request. *All of us were ill*, but by the time he came, my father died, and was brought us home a corpse, before the dining hour. This was December, 1762, fifty-three years ago exactly. Yet are not my feelings blunted!

The will gave to my mother his Bachygraig House and estate

for life, charged with £ 5,000 for me ; to which my uncle, in consideration perhaps of my poor father's having paid every expense of his education at Cambridge, perhaps in recollection of having lost him a farm of £ 100 a year, added £ 5,000 more ; with which (and expectations of course) Mr. Thrale deigned to accept my undesired hand, and in ten months from my poor father's death, were *both* the marriages he feared accomplished.

My uncle went himself with me to church, gave me away, dined with us at Streatham Park, returned to Hertfordshire, wedded the widow, and then scarce ever saw or wrote to either of us ; leaving me to conciliate as I could a husband, who was indeed much kinder than I counted on, to a *plain girl*, who had not one attraction in his eyes, and on whom he never had thrown five minutes of his time away, in any interview unwitnessed by company, even till after our wedding-day was done !

My mother staid with us, however, so did her niece, Miss Hester Salusbury Cotton, now Lady Corbet. Mr. Murphy was introduced, and the facetious Georgey Bodens, as the men called him. Lord Carhampton's father, Simon Luttrell, afterwards known to all the town by the emphatic title " King of Hell," * besides a very sickly old physician, who seemed as if living with us, Dr. Fitzpatrick, a Roman Catholic ; the rest were professed Infidels.

When winter came, however, I was carried to my town residence, Deadman's Place, Southwark ; which house, no more than that in Surrey, had been seen by me till called on to inhabit it. Here, too, my mother quitted us, and lived at our old mansion in Dean Street, Soho, then no unfashionable part of the world, and thither I went — O how willingly ! — to visit her every day. My husband's sisters † (who, like himself, were eminent for personal beauty) now called on me, looked at me, and, in modern phrase, seemed to *quiz* me, asking how I liked Dr. Fitzpatrick, their brother's Jesuit friend ? I answered drily, that the Doctor was well-read and well-bred, apparently in extreme ill health (he was

* It was told of him that he challenged his son, the Colonel Luttrell (afterwards Earl of Carhampton) of Middlesex election celebrity, who refused to fight him, " not because he was his father, but because he was not a gentleman."

† Mrs. Rice, Mrs. Nesbitt (afterwards Mrs. Scott), and Lady Lade.

a physician), and that Mr. Thrale's friends must necessarily be mine. The ladies withdrew, disappointed, and I tried with all diligence to canvass the man whom *they* thought, and of course I thought, had so much influence; where if I gained none I must become a nuisance. The doctor had no more influence than myself; but being so much *about* them all, could at least tell me *les tracasseries de famille* of which I was wholly ignorant. From him in due time I learned what had determined my husband's choice to *me*, till then a standing wonder. He had, the doctor said, asked several women, naming them, but all except *me* refused to live in the Borough, to which, and to his business, he observed, that Mr. Thrale was as unaccountably attached *now* as he had been in his father's time averse from both. And O, cried the old man, how would my deceased friend have delighted in this happy sight! alluding to my state of pregnancy.

So summer came again, and Streatham Park was improving, and autumn came, and Lady Keith came, and I became of a *little* more importance. Confidence was no word in our vocabulary, and I tormented myself to guess who possessed that of Mr. Thrale; not his clerks certainly, who scarce dared approach *him*, — much less come near *me*; whose place he said was either in the drawing-room or the bedchamber. We kept, meantime, a famous pack of fox-hounds, at a hunting-box near Croydon; but it was masculine for ladies to ride, &c. We kept the finest table possible at Streatham Park, but *his* wife was not to *think of the kitchen*. So I never knew what was for dinner till I saw it.

Driven thus on literature as my sole resource, no wonder if I loved my books and children. From a *gay* life my mother held me fast. Those pleasures Mr. Thrale enjoyed alone; with *me* indeed they never would have suited; I was too often and too long confined. Although Dr. Johnson (now introduced among us) told me once, before *her* face, who deeply did resent it, that I lived like my husband's kept mistress, — shut from the world, its pleasures, or its cares.

The scene was soon to change. Fox-hounds were sold, and a seat in Parliament was suggested by our ^{new} inmate as more suitable to his dignity, more desirable in every respect. I grew useful now, *almost* necessary; wrote the advertisements, looked

to the treats, and people to whom I was till then unknown, admired how happy Mr. Thrale must be in such a *wonder* of a wife.

I wondered all the while where his heart lay ; but it was found at last, too soon for joy, too late almost for sorrow. A vulgar fellow, by name Humphrey Jackson, had, as the clerks informed me, all in a breath, compleat possession of it. He had long practised on poor Thrale's credulity, till, by mixing two cold liquors which produced heat perhaps, or two colorless liquors which produced brilliancy, he had at length prevailed on him to think he could produce beer too, without the *beggarly elements* of malt and hops. He had persuaded him to build a copper somewhere in East Smithfield, the very metal of which cost £2,000, wherein this Jackson was to make experiments and conjure some curious stuff, which should preserve ships' bottoms from the worm ; gaining from Government money to defray these mad expenses. Twenty enormous vats, holding 1,000 hogsheads each, — costly contents ! — ten more holding 1,000 barrels each, were constructed to stew in this pernicious mess ; and afterwards erected, on I forget how much ground bought for the ruinous purpose.

That *all* were spoiled, was but a secondary sorrow. We had, in the commercial phrase, no beer to start for customers. We had no money to purchase with. Our clerks, insulted long, rebelled and *ratted*, but I held them in. A sudden run menaced the house, and death hovered over the head of its principal. I think some faint image of the distress appears in Doctor Johnson's forty-eighth letter, 1st. vol. But God tempers every evil with some good. Such was my charming mother's firmness, and such her fond attachment to us both, that our philosophical friend, embracing her, exclaimed, that he was equally charmed by her conduct, and edified by her piety. "Fear not the menaces of suicide," said he ; "the man who has two such females to console him, never yet killed himself, and will not *now*. Of all the bankrupts made this dreadful year," continued he, "none have destroyed themselves but married men ; who would have risen from the weeds undrowned, had not the women clung about and sunk them, stifling the voice of ~~him~~ reason with their cries." Ah, Sir James Fellowes, and have not I too been in a ship on fire,* not for two

* Alluding to the fire on board an East Indiaman, in which Sir James Fellowes was passenger.

hours, but for two full weeks, between the knowledge of my danger and the end on 't?

Well! first we made free with our mother's money, her little savings! about £ 3,000 — 't was all she had; and, big as I was with child, I drove down to Brighthelmstone, to beg of Mr. Scrase £ 6,000 more; he gave it us, and Perkins, the head clerk, had never done repeating my short letter to our master, which only said, "I have done my errand, and you soon shall see returned, *whole*, as I hope, your heavy but faithful messenger, H. L. T."

Perkins's sons are now in possession of the place, their father but lately dead. Dear Mr. Scrase was an old gouty solicitor, retired from business, friend and contemporary of my husband's father. Mr. Rush lent us £ 6,000, Lady Lade £ 5,000, — our debts, including those of Humphrey Jackson, were £ 130,000, besides borrowed money. Yet in *nine years* was every shilling paid; *one*, if not *two* elections well contested; and we *might*, at Mr. Thrale's death, have had money, had he been willing to listen to advice, as you will see by our correspondence, which it is now time for you to begin, and be released from these scenes of calamity. The baby that I carried lived an *hour*, — my mother a year; but she left our minds more easy. I lay awake twelve nights and days, I remember, 'spite of all art could do; but here I am, vexing your tired ear with past afflictions.

You will see that many letters were suppressed. But as you have probably thought more of my literary, than of my moral or social existence, *though I hope not*, it will be right at least to say that it was during *the winters* of those happy years when I reigned Queen at Offley Place all summer, that Hogarth made me sit for his fine picture of the Lady's Last Stake, now in possession of Lord Charlemont.

It was then, too, when I was about thirteen, fourteen, and fifteen years old, that I took a fancy to write in the "St. James's Chronicle," unknown to my parents and my tutor too: it was my sport to see them reading, studying, blaming, or praising their own little whimsical girl's performances; but such was their admiration of one *little verse thing*, that I could not forbear owning it, and am sorry that no copy has, I believe, been kept.

The little poetical trash I *did* write in *earnest*, is preserved somewhere, perhaps in "Thraliana," which I *promised* to Mrs. Mostyn; perhaps in a small repository I prepared for dear Salusbury, before our final parting: such I meant it to be; but have no guess how you will find the stuff, or whether he ever thought it worth his while to keep old aunt's school exercises, — such he would probably and naturally consider them. There is a little poem called "Offley Park" I know; another "On my Poor Aunt Anna Maria's Favorite Ash-Tree;" and one styled "The Old Hunter's Petition for Life," written to save dear Forester from being shot because grown superannuated. There is a little odd metaphysical toy beside, written to divert Doctor Collier after the death of his dog Pompey, for whom James Harris made a Greek epitaph, of which this is the English meaning, as I remember; but no doubt *all is lost*, and these verses are *not* mine. I forget whose though: —

" Here what remains of Pompey lies,
 Handsome, generous, faithful, wise.
 Then shouldst thou, friend, possess a bitch
 In nature's noble gifts as rich;
 When Death shall take her, let her have
 With Pompey here one common grave;
 So from their mingled dust shall rise
 A race of dogs as good and wise:
 Dogs who disease shall never know,
 Rheumatic ache or gouty toe;
 Nor feel the dire effects of tea,
 Nor show decay by cachexy.
 For if aright the future Fates I read,
 Immortal are the dogs their pregnant dust shall breed."

The great James Harris was no disdainer of trifles. He wrote the two comical dialogues at the end of "David Simple," an old novel composed by Doctor Collier's sister, who was dead before I knew him, in conjunction with Sally Fielding, whose brother was author of "Tom Jones," not yet obsolete. James Harris gave me his "Hermes" interleaved, that I might write my remarks on it, proving my attention to philosophical grammar, for which study I had shown him signs of capacity, I trust; but Collier would not suffer him to talk metaphysics in my hearing, unless he himself was the respondent. O what conversations!

What correspondences were these! never renewed after my wedding-day, October 11th, 1763. Dr. Johnson was perhaps justly offended if I even appeared to recollect them, and in my mother's presence. There was no danger. They had never fallen in Mr. Thrale's way — of course.

But you make me an egotist, and force me to remember scenes and ideas I never dreamed of communicating. The less so, because finding my fortune of late circumscribed in a manner wholly new to me, no doubt remained of all celebrity following my lost power of entertaining company, giving parties, &c.; and my heart prepared to shut itself quite up, convinced there existed not a human creature who cared one atom for poor H. L. P. now she had no longer money to be robbed of. That disinterested kindness does exist, however, my treatment here at Bath evinces daily, and in six months will come — if things do but continue in their natural course — my restoration day. Meanwhile this odd prefatory collection of Biographical Anecdotes are at your service. The Essays I wrote when quite a girl — almost a child — must all be lost undoubtedly. The following Allegory is just as good as I could make it now, bating the grand fault of representing Imagination as a female character. This is glanced at in 221 and 222 of "British Synonymy," Vol. I.; but I did myself injustice in calling it a translation, for such it really is not, or deserving to be called so.

IMAGINATION'S SEARCH AFTER HAPPINESS, AN ALLEGORICAL TALE.

BY H. L. SALUSBURY, 1760.

Struck with his charms whom all admire,
 Whose beauties colder bosoms fire,
 Imagination ventured forth
 In search of Happiness, — her lover;
 Nor feared the frowns of wit or worth,
 No blame could on her choice be thrown,
 When once the object's name was known.
 To Love's gay temple first she flies,
 And darts around her piercing eyes,
 And is my hero here? she cries;
 Perhaps he may, the god replies;

But freely search our groves around,
Nor think yourself confined ;
His name our echoes all resound,
Perhaps his form you 'll find.
The Nymph was pleased, her search renewed ;
Through each soft maze her love pursued,
Till as she ran with rapid force
Fair Delicacy checked her course.
I never thought to see you here,
Without a veil too ! Fye, my dear :
To seek your sweetheart ! and is this
A likely seat for sober bliss ?
Believe my words and quick recede,
No Happiness lives here — *Indeed*.

Imagination stood corrected,
Then swiftly from her presence flew ;
And soon her wand'ring steps directed
T' Ambition's palace — now in view.
Fixed on a rock of steep ascent
The glittering fabric stood :
The way was slippery as she went,
And wet with human blood.
Her lover's form on high was placed
To tempt her steps along :
But when the phantom she embraced,
It vanished and was gone.
From hence with trembling haste she fled,
And to the realms of Riches sped :
Consumptive care, and dropsied pride,
And tinselled splendor here she spied ;
Nor ought was wanting — more or less,
Save what she sought for — Happiness.

What has our heroine next to do ?
Her journey she began to rue,
For why ? No places now remain
To try her fortune in 't is plain :
And yet this foolish, luckless love
Would let her have no rest :
Though 'gainst it all she could she strove,
Still would it flutter in her breast.
Whilst thus she thought and would have spoke,
Sudden a voice the silence broke :

Come to my cot, despairing maid !
 'T is mine alone to give you aid :
 Come to my cot and live with me,
 In unreprieved pleasures free.
 Young Health that seeks the morning air,
 With Temperance at her side, are there ;
 Meek Peace that loves the hermitage,
 And Contemplation — hoary sage ;
 With me long time have deigned to dwell,
 And dignified my mossy cell.
 If you such company can bear,
 And will awhile inhabit there ;
 Nor more your search renew ;
 Your lover will no longer fly :
 'T is his to curb when we deny,
 And fly when we pursue.
 Imagination found her wise,
 Nor scorned to own herself to blame,
 But took fair Piety's advice —
 Uncalled the Lover came.

The article in "British Synonymy," before referred to, runs thus : —

" FANCY, IMAGINATION.

" ' Fancy, whose delusions vain
 Sport themselves with human brain,
 Rival thou of nature's power !
 Canst from thy exhaustless store
 Bid a tide of sorrow flow,
 And overwhelm the soul in deepest woe,
 Or in the twinkling of an eye
 Raise it to mirth and jollity ?
 Dreams and shadows by thee stand,
 Taught to run at thy command,
 And along the wanton air
 Flit like empty gossamer.

MERRICK.'

" These elegant and airy substantives are not, as one might suspect, wholly synonymous. A well-instructed foreigner will soon discover that, though in poetry, there seems little distinction, yet when they both come to be talked of in a conversation circle,

we do say that Milton has displayed a boundless *imagination* in his poem of 'Paradise Lost,' transporting us, as it were, into the very depths of eternity, while he describes the journey of Satan and the games of the fallen angels ; but that Pope's 'Rape of the Lock' is a work of exquisite *fancy*, almost emulative of Shakspeare's creative powers, not servilely imitating him. An intelligent stranger will observe, too, that although we give sex very arbitrarily to personified qualities, yet he will commonly find *Fancy* feminine, *Imagination* masculine, I scarce know why. But

" ' Save in this shadowy nook, this green resort,
Imagination holds *his* airy court,
Bright Fancy fans *him* with *her* painted wings,
And to *his* sight *her* varying pleasures brings.'

"The French do not stick to this rule : an allegorical tale of Mademoiselle Barnard, begins thus : —

" ' L'imagination amante du bonheur,
Sans cesse le desire, et sans cesse le rappelle,' &c.

"Our translator, following the original design, by making *Imagination* feminine, has spoiled the effect of the poem. It is likewise observable that, speaking physically, these words are by no means synonymous, nor can be used each for other without manifest impropriety."

INTRODUCTION TO PIOZZI.

[THE following fragments of autobiography (with one exception) are in the shape of notes to the printed volumes of correspondence between Dr. Johnson and herself. I print them as they occur, with the portions of the correspondence which respectively suggested them.

This history of her acquaintance with Piozzi is detailed in a note on the passage (quoted *ante*, p. 70) from one of Johnson's letters, in which he congratulates her on having "got Piozzi again."]

Dr. Johnson, mentioning dear Piozzi, has encouraged me to tell how and where our acquaintance began. I was at Bright-helmstone in August, 1780, or thereabout, when the rioters at Bath had driven my sick husband and myself and Miss Thrale (Fanny Burney went home to her father) into Sussex for change of place. I had been in the sea early one morning, and was walking with my eldest daughter on the cliff, when, seeing Mr. Piozzi stand at the library door, I accosted him in Italian, and asked him if he would like to give that lady a lesson or two whilst at Brighton, that she might not be losing her time. He replied, coldly, that he was come thither himself merely to recover his voice, which he feared was wholly lost; that he was composing some music, and lived in great retirement; so I took my leave, and we continued our walk, Miss Thrale regretting she had lost such an opportunity; but on our returning home the same day, Mr. Piozzi started out of the shop, begged my pardon for not knowing me before, protested his readiness to do anything to oblige *me*, and his concern for not being able to contribute to our amusement, but that I should command everything in his now limited power.

We parted, and at breakfast the post brought me a letter from the present Madame D'Arblaye, saying that her father's friend,

Mr. Piozzi, was gone to Brighthelmstone, where she hoped we should meet, for though he had lost his voice, his musical powers were enchanting, and that I should find him a companion likely to lighten the burden of life to *me*, as he was *just a man to my natural taste*. This letter is existing now, and that was her expression. Mr. Thrale found his performance on the forte-piano so superior to everything then heard in England, and in short took such a fancy to his society, that we were seldom apart, except while Mr. Piozzi was studying to compose the six fine sonatas, that he dedicated to his favorite pupil, Miss Child, afterwards Lady Westmoreland. His voice strengthened by sea-bathing, but never recovered the astonishing powers he brought with him first from Italy. I fancied they would have returned when we went abroad together four years after, but they never did; and he was contented in future to delight, without surprising, his hearers, unless they had indeed taste enough to understand that unrivalled *manner* of singing, which he as tenor, and Pacchierotti as soprano, had completely to themselves.

Mr. Piozzi was the son of a gentleman of Brescia in Lombardy, who meant him for the Church and educated him accordingly; but he resisted the celibat, escaped from those who would have made him take the vows, and, as his uncle said, "Ah, Gabrieli, thou wilt never get nearer the altar than the organ-loft," so it proved. He ran from the Venetian state to Milan, where Marchese D'Araciel proved his constant friend and protector, and encouraged him in his fancy for trying Paris and London, instead of being a burden to his parents, who had fourteen children, a limited income, and many pecuniary uneasinesses. Whilst *here*, his fame reached the Queen of France, who sent for him and Sacchini, the great opera composer, and it was when they came back loaded with presents and honors and emoluments that Dr. Johnson congratulated me on having got Piozzi again. Sacchini returned and died at Paris, but Piozzi staid (till I drove him from me), notwithstanding all the offers of the Court of France, when I was living at Bath, "deserted, spiritless, afflicted, fallen."

DOMESTIC TRIALS.

HER letter written in Passion Week, 1783 ("Letters," Vol. II. p. 253), was in answer to one from Dr. Johnson, dwelling on his own ailments exclusively, and complaining of neglect. He says: "You can hardly think how bad I have been whilst you were in all your altitudes at the opera, and all the fine places, and thinking little of me." She replies: "My health, my children, and my fortune, dear Sir, are fast coming to an end, I think, — not so my sorrows. Harriet is dead, and Cicely is dying."

Her manuscript commentary on these passages is: —

"Dear Harriet died of measles, whooping-cough, and strumous swellings in the neck and throat, 1783. Lucy had fallen a sacrifice to the same train of evils; and Cecilia, now Mrs. Mostyn, had her health so shaken after the date of this letter, that it was with the utmost difficulty she recovered. Mr. Piozzi and I had made what we considered as our final parting in London about a month before, when I requested him to tame the newspapers by quitting England, and leave me to endure my debts, my distractions, and the bitter reproaches of my family *as I could*. He had given up all my letters, promises, &c., into Miss Thrale's hands (now Lady Keith). You laughed when I told you that his expression was: 'Take it to you your mamma, and make it of *her* a countess; it shall kill me, I know, but it shall kill her too.' Miss Thrale took the papers, and turned her back on him, I remember. Well! Sir Lucas Pepys alone knew the true state of my heart. He pitied me, kept my secret inviolable, behaved like a brother to me, and told all the inquirers that I was very ill indeed, and that *he had advised Bath*.

"To Bath I went, and Piozzi prepared for his melancholy journey, having first lent me a thousand pounds, for which I remitted the interest to Italy, and our ladies said I had bought him off *with their money*; so the calumny outlived even our separation. He had not left London when I was summoned to attend the two little girls at Mrs. Ray's school, Russel House, Streat-

ham ; but I refused another painful interview, however earnestly my lover begged it. I breakfasted with Sir Lucas Pepys ; told him my heroism, and never knew, till Piozzi told me after he returned to England, that he had been sitting at a front window of some public-house on the road all that dreadful Saturday, to see my carriage pass backwards and forwards to where the children resided. O what moments ! O what moments ! but I went back to Bath. We lived in Russel Street, where I found my three eldest daughters at their work and their drawings. I *think* they scarcely said, ‘How d’ye do? or how does Cecilia do?’ and we went on together without either rough words or smooth ones. Dr. Staker, to whom Pepys had recommended the care of my health, cut his own throat, and Doctors Woodward (of the pretty house in Gay Street) and Dobson, from Liverpool, were our medical advisers.

“Doctor Johnson never came to look for me at Streatham, where I lodged during Cecy’s danger ; and I would not go into London for fear of encountering Piozzi’s eyes somewhere. So I only stopped at Pepys’ house for an hour, close to Hyde Park, and away to Bath again, where one curious thing befell me, and but one. You have heard of many severities shown me, now hear of one man like yourself. My maid came to me half-alarmed, half-pleasant somehow, and said : ‘I have had a king’s messenger sent to me, Madam ; but here’s the letter, and the man is gone again. I offered him money, but he had orders to take none.’

“The letter said :—

“‘MADAM, — Let nothing add to your present pain, as no one surely deserves so much happiness. Your letter is gone safe ; I transmitted the *amiable contents* to Mr. Piozzi, who will receive it in due time ; but you should be careful not to send another packet unpaid for, unless you would direct it to me. Your signing no name, and dating, forced me to peruse every word of a letter in three languages, which no one could so have written but Mrs. Thrale, to whom I wish all that such merit and virtue, &c., &c., &c.’

“‘JACKSON,

“‘Comptroller of the Foreign Post Office.’

“He had directed the letter to my maid !

“We left our cards with this gentleman as soon as we were married, of course, and he made us a fine dinner and a grand entertainment, and I saw for the first time my kind friend and admirer, Mr. Jackson. Poor fellow ! he soon died, but not till Mr. Piozzi had sung with his daughter, and given him all the pleasure he was capable of receiving in the last stage of life, and a miserable state of health.”

SECOND MARRIAGE.

IN Dr. Johnson's last letter to her (*ante*, p. 76), he says : "Prevail on Mr. Piozzi to settle in England." In reference to this advice she writes : —

Dr. Johnson's advice corresponded exactly with Mr. Piozzi's intentions. He was impatient to show Italy to me and *me* to the Italians, but never meant to forbear bringing his wife home again, and showing he had brought her. Well aware of the bustle his marriage made, it was his most earnest wish that every doubt of his honor and of my happiness should be dispelled ; so that whilst our ladies and Madame D'Arblaye, that was Miss Burney, and Baretti, and all the low Italians of the Haymarket who hated my husband, were hatching stories how he had sold my jointure, had shut me up in a convent, &c., we made our journey to our residence in Italy as showy as we possibly could. All the English at every town partook of our hospitality ; the inhabitants came flocking, nothing loth, and we sent presents to our beautiful daughters by every hand that would carry them. Miss Thrale was of age by now, and I left Miss Nicholson, the bishop's granddaughter, whom they appeared to like exceedingly, *with them*, but she soon quitted her post on observing that they gave people to understand she was a cast mistress of dear Piozzi, who never saw her face out of their company, except once at a dinner visit.

But I have not told you our parting. That I resided at Bath, these letters are a proof ; that my residence was a wretched one, needs no asserting. Insults at home, and spiteful expressions in every letter from the guardians, broke my spirits quite down ; and letters from my grieving lover, when they *did* come, helped to render my life miserable. I meant not to call him home till all my debts were paid ; and my uncle's widow, Lady Salusbury, had threatened to seize upon my Welsh estate if I did not repay *her* money, lent by Sir Thomas Salusbury to my father ; money

in effect which poor papa had borrowed to give *him* when he was a student at Cambridge, and your little friend just born. This debt, however, not having been cancelled, stood against me as heiress. I had been forced to borrow from the ladies; and Mr. Crutchley, when I signed my mortgage to them for £7,000, said: "Now, Madam, call your daughters in and thank them; make them your best *curtsey*," (with a sneer,) "for keeping you out of a gaol." He added £500 or £800 more, and I paid that off as alluded to;* but Doctor Johnson knew how I was distressed, and you see how even he had been writing!!

Will you wonder to hear how ill I was? After much silent suffering, Doctor Dobson, who felt for me even to tears, left me one evening in the slipper bath, and I suppose ran to Lady Keith, and spoke with some severity; for she came into the room with him, and said, "The doctor tells me, Madam, he must write to Mr. Piozzi about your health; will you be pleased to tell us where to find him?" "At Milan, my dear," was the faint reply, "with his friend, the Marquis D'Araciel (a Spanish grandee); *his* palace, Milan, is sufficient direction." "Milan!" exclaimed they all at once, for not one word had ever passed among us concerning him or his destination. "Milan!" So Doctor Dobson, I trust, took pen and ink, and the next day I was better. Miss Thrale declared her resolution to go to their own house at Brighthelmstone, and I entreated permission to attend them. Short journeys, change of air, &c., helped to revive me, and Miss Nicholson went with us to Stonehenge, Wilton, &c., in our way to Sussex, whence I returned to Bath to wait for Piozzi. He was here the eleventh day after he got Dobson's letter. In twenty-six more we were married in London by the Spanish ambassador's chaplain, and returned hither to be married by Mr. Morgan, of Bath, at St. James's Church, July 25, 1784.

Greenland, the solicitor my husband now employed, discovered £1,600 still due to me, which was paid on demand; and for the rest of the debt, Piozzi, laughing, said it would be discharged in three years at farthest. So it was; and I felt as

* Dr. Johnson wrote to Mrs. Thrale, London, April 19th, 1784: "I am sensible of the ease that your repayment of Mr. Crutcheley has given: you felt yourself *genée* by that debt: is there an English word for it?"

much, I think, of astonishment as pleasure. From London we went immediately to Paris, Lyons, Turin, Genoa, and Milan; where, as the Travel Book tells you, we spent the winter, and where the Marquis of Araciel and his family paid me most distinguished attention. There Mr. Parsons dined with us, I remember, and left me a copy of complimentary verses too long to insert here; but we met again the following summer at Florence, where we were living in a sort of literary coterie with Mr. and Mrs. Greathead, Mr. Merry, whom his friends called Della Crusca, and a most agreeable *et cetera* of English and Italians. We had designed giving a splendid dinner on our wedding-day to Lord Pembroke and the whole party, and Mr. Parsons presented me verses which will not be understood except I write out my own that provoked them. He had written a hymn to Venus, so I said:—

While Venus inspires, and such verses you sing
 As Prior might envy and praise;
 While Merry can mount on the eagle's wide wing,
 Or melt in the nightingale's lays:
 On the beautiful banks of this classical stream
 While Bertie can carelessly rove,
 Dividing his hours, and varying his theme
 With philosophy, friendship, and love;

In vain all the beauties of nature or art
 To rouse my tranquillity tried;
 Too often, said I, has this languishing heart
 For the joys of celebrity sighed.
 Now soothed by soft music's seducing delights,
 With reciprocal tenderness blest;
 No more will I pant for poetical flights,
 Or let vanity rob me of rest.

The Slave and the Wrestlers, what are they to me?
 From plots and contentions removed;
 And Job with still less satisfaction I see,
 When I think of the pains I have proved.
 It was thus that I sought in oblivion to drown
 Each thought from remembrance that flows:
 Thus fancy was stagnant I honestly own,
 But I called the stagnation repose.

Now, waked by my countrymen's voice once again
 To enjoyment of pleasures long past ;
 Her powers elastic the soul shall regain,
 And recall her original taste.
 Like the loadstone that long lay concealed in the earth,
 Among metals which glittered around ;
 Inactive her talents, and only called forth,
 When the ore correspondent was found.

To these lines Mr. Parsons brought the following very flattering answer, which he repeated after dinner : —

“ *To Mrs. Piozzi.*

“ Though soothed by soft music's seducing delights,
 And blest with reciprocal love ;
 These cannot impede your poetical flights,
 For still friends to the Muses they prove.
 Then sitting so gayly your table around,
 Let us all with glad sympathy view
 What joys in this fortunate union abound,
 This union of wit and virtù.

“ May the day that now sees you so mutually blest
 In full confidence, love, and esteem,
 Still return with increasing delight to your breast,
 And be Hymen your favorite theme !
 Nor fear that your fertile strong genius should fail,
 Each thought of stagnation dispel ;
 The fame which so long has attended a *Thrale*,
 A *Piozzi* alone shall excel.

“ As the ore must for ever obedient be found
 By the loadstone attracted along :
 So in England you drew all the poets around,
 By the magical force of your song :
 The same power on Arno's fair side you retain ;
 Your talents with wonder we see ;
 And we hope from your converse those talents to gain,
 Though like magnets — in smaller degree.”

Now if I should live to add any more anecdotes of my life, or any more verses to amuse you, they would come best at the end of my Journey-Book ; and if you will send it, perhaps I may add a leaf or two. — 18th December, 1815.

RESIDENCE IN ITALY.

(A separate and detached manuscript.)

BEFORE we began our journey, my good husband bespoke a magnificent carriage, capable of containing every possible accommodation, and begged me to take tea enough and books enough; but when looking over the last article he saw "Diodati's Italian Bible, with Notes" (this was in 1784, I remember). "Ah ciel!" he exclaimed, "this will bring us into trouble. Be content, my dear creature, with an English Bible, and reflect that you are not travelling as you ought to be, like a Protestant lady of quality, but as the wife of a native, an acknowledged Papist, and one determined to remain so." I replied, from my heart, that I desired to appear in his country in no other character than that of his wife; that I would preserve my religious opinions inviolate at Milan, as he did his at London; and that all would go on, to use his own phrase, *all' ottima perfezzione*. Observing an under-toned expression, however, saying, "They shall tease *quest' anima bella* as little as I can help," my heart *felt* (though I changed the conversation) that my mind must prepare itself for controversy. The account of temptations he told me I should undergo of *another* kind I drove from me with unaffected laughter, but perceived that *he* was best pleased when I replied to them with equally unaffected but more *serious* protestations of exclusive and unalterable love.

He was right all the while. When we arrived at Milan, our abiding-place, I perceived the men of quality and *bon ton* considered me as fair game to shoot their senseless attentions at; and my sometimes cold, sometimes indignant, reception of their odd complimentary addresses was received at first with most unmerited displeasure, and in a short time with admiration no less undeserved. Conjugal fidelity being a thing they had no conception of, and each concluding I kept my favors for some one else,

nothing undeceived them but my strictly-adhered-to resolution of never suffering a *tête-à-tête* with any man whatever except my husband, and laughing with them in company, saying we inhabited a Casa Fidele, and should do honor to the residence.

The truth is, old Comte Fidele, a widower of seventy years old, said his house was too big for him (an invalid), and gave us up the winter side of his palace for a year, paying only £ 80. My bedchamber, twenty-seven feet long and eighteen feet high, was lighted by one immense window at the end, and looked over the naviglio to the beautiful mountains of Brianza. Out of *this* went a handsome square room, where I received my company in common. Out of that we walked into a large dinner apartment, next to which was the servants' hall (as we should call it, but known in Italy by name of anticamera), where and from whence the servants answered the bell. Through this opened the best drawing-room, with two fireplaces, two large glass lustres, four enormous windows with yellow damask curtains I am ashamed to say how long, but my maid always said they were eight yards from top to bottom. Her apartment opened through *this*; for all were passage-rooms, and a small pair of stairs led to a lovely cold bath. I have not done yet. Behind my magnificent bed of white-watered tabby, and very clean, a door opened into a large light closet where I kept my books; and through that a commodious staircase led to Mr. Piozzi's bedchamber, and a beautiful dressing-room or study, where he was supposed to receive company, people on business, &c. All this very well furnished indeed for fourscore pounds a year!! A. D. 1784.

The showy valet was a Frenchman hired at Paris, the gaudy butler out of livery resembling nothing but a gold fish, had eighteen pence a day, and the man cook no less. One woman, besides my own English Abigail, formed our household; a word I should not have used, for they all walked home in the evening, after the wives and children, &c., had been brought into the kitchen almost *literally* to lick the plates. It seemed very odd, but I believe Mr. Piozzi paid everybody every night of his life. I remember his asking me one day what I thought our dinner came to; we were eight at table, the dishes seven and nine. When I had made some ridiculous conjectures, he showed me that the

whole expense, wine included, was thirteen shillings of our money, no more, and I expected to hear him say how happy he was. Not a bit; he was happy only in my attachment and society; his countrymen were his scourge. They told him, as I was a Protestant I was of course an infidel, and should be a favorite at the German court which the Emperor kept at Milan. So I was; but one day when some of our Italian ecclesiastics dined with us and met the Austrian Count Kinigh, the Viennese librarian, &c., who endeavored to play upon the natives, ridiculing their superstitions, &c., I could bear no more of what they called philosophy, the less, perhaps, because they hoped I should be pleased with such discourse, and much amazed our Milanese friends by saying, when applied to, that I really thought the thorns of ancient philosophy were now only fit to burn in the fire, unless we could make a hedge of them to fence in the possession of Christian truth.

This speech won all the old abates' hearts at once, and was echoed about with ten times the praise it deserved. I was now assailed on every side to become a Romanist, for *Catholics* I never would submit to call *them* who excluded from salvation every sect of our religion but their own. Dear Piozzi grew more and more weary of this controversial chat; but it was comical to see with how much pleasure he witnessed my gaining even a momentary triumph over these men, skilled in disputation and masters of their own language. "Are you a Calvinist, Madam?" said one of the Monsignori. "Certainly *not*," was the reply. "Do you kneel to receive the Sacrament?" "*I do*." "And are not those fellows damned who do receive it standing or sitting?" "I believe *not*," said I. "Our blessed Lord did not himself eat the passover according to the strict rules of the Mosaical law, which insists on its being eaten *standing*; whereas we know that Jesus Christ reclined on a triclinium, as was the usage of Rome and of *the times*. Nay, perhaps he was pleased to do so, that such disputes should not arise; or, if arising, that his example might be appealed to." "What proof have you of our Saviour's reclining on a triclinium?" "St. John's leaning on his breast at supper," said I. "O, that was at common meals; not at the passover." "Excuse me, my lord, it was at

the *last* solemn supper, which we all commemorate with our best intentions, some one way, some another. *Their* method is not yours, neither is it *mine* ; let us beware of judging, lest we ourselves be judged." "Fetch me a Bible, Sir," said Monsignore. "I will bring mine," said I. "Excuse *me* now, Madam," replied my antagonist ; "we cannot abide but by the Vulgate." Canonico Palazzi offered to go ; I begged of him to buy me one at the next bookseller's, three doors off. My victory was complete, and I have the *Bible still* which won it for me.

All this, however delightful, grew *very* wearisome and a *little* dangerous ; and we were glad when springtime came, that we might set out upon our travels.

Every new comer from that country (England) told us how all ill-reports had subsided, how the Cardinal Prince d'Orini's civilities had been related up and down, and in short that we had but to return, secure of every comfort Great Britain could afford. Mr. Piozzi said, the moment every debt should be discharged, that he would turn his horses' heads towards the island he had always preferred to every other place ; and, so saying, we travelled on, as happy in leaving Milan as in arriving there. *Au reste*, as the French say, few things befell us worth recording, except Count Manucci's visit. He had been intimate with Mr. Thrale in England, as Johnson's letters abundantly testify, and had taken a fancy to Mr. Piozzi at Paris, when he was there with Sacchini. Hearing, therefore, of this marriage, he came one morning, but never had a notion that it was with *me* he had connected himself. 'Ah, Madame !' exclaimed the Count, 'quel coup de Théâtre !' when the door opened, and showed him an old acquaintance with a new name. This was the nobleman who, I told you, lamented so tenderly that his sister's children were *counterfeited*.

We return to the Biographical Anecdotes.

The letters from our daughters had been cold and unfrequent during the whole absence ; a little more so as we approached nearer home. The newspapers had told of our exploits at Brussels, and public good-humor seemed disposed to wait and even to meet our return. Fector, the government officer at Dover, would not even *look* into our portmanteaus, trunks, &c. ; and I saw in-

stantly that the tide was turned. Numberless cards were left at the Royal Hotel, where we remained till a house in Hanover Square was fitted up to receive us, and on the 22d of May, we opened with a concert and supper, the more willingly, as Mr. Cator, in whose hands we placed our pecuniary affairs at starting, pronounced the mortgage paid off, and £ 1,500 in the bank to begin with. This Mr. Cator *had* been one of our insulting enemies; was acting executor to Mr. Thrale and guardian to his daughters; *had* said, that I should be soon deceased, but my death would be concealed by Mr. Piozzi, while he enjoyed my jointure, &c.; *this* man's approbation was indeed a triumph, and we now intended to be happy.

Cecilia had been left at Ray and Frey's school at Streatham, with friends I could depend on; but Lady Keith removed her thence and placed her at Stevenson's, Queen's Square, without my knowledge or consent. We kept our distance then, and so did they; meeting only in public. I took my little mad-headed Cecilia home, and we had masters to her, &c. Nor do I know when the sisters and I should have met again, had not *she* grown so fast that at fourteen years old or six months more, Mr. Piozzi felt himself alarmed, and was advised by our friends, Lord Huntingdon, Sir Charles Hotham, and the Greatheads, with whom we lived familiarly, to put the young lady into Chancery, a measure he was most earnest to adopt. We were at Streatham Park, but I observed my husband unusually anxious, when an old Mr. Jones who had married Sir William Fowler's daughter, my mother's first cousin, told me that the Miss Thrales had made overtures of reconciliation through *him* (who lived much with us), and that he should make a breakfast party for us all at his house in Cavendish Square, with my permission. It was the middle of the French Revolution, so there was talk enough, and the day went on very well with an invitation to the ladies for Easter Tuesday, I remember; and Pisani, the Venetian ambassador, Lord and Lady Coventry, and 130 people, in short, witnessed our gayety and mutual good-humor. Three weeks more, however, had scarce elapsed before Miss Thrale, now Viscountess Keith, came down on horseback, and said she must speak to us on *business*. It was to beg Mr. Piozzi would *not* put Cecilia into

Chancery. Their fortunes, they alleged, would be examined by lawyers, and *dear* Mr. Cator's accounts too would be hauled over, with which *they* were well contented; alluding, besides this, to some undisclosed dealings and connections of their father's, wholly *new* and very surprising to *me*, who had no notion of his affairs beyond the counting-house and brewhouse yard. In short, they frightened us into every compliance they could wish, then kept their distance as before, sending perpetually for Cecy.

Libels and odd ill-natured speeches appeared sometimes in the public prints, and one day of the ensuing winter, when I was airing my lap-dogs in a retired part of Hyde Park, Lord Fife came up to me, and after a moment's chat, said, "Would you like to know your friends from your enemies?" in a Scotch accent. "Yes, very much, my lord," was the reply. "Ay, but have you strength of mind enough to bear my intelligence?" "Make haste and tell me, dear my lord," said I. "Why then the Burneys are your enemies, that so fostered and fondled; more than that, Baretti has been making up a libel, and every magazine has refused it entrance except a new work carried on by the female Burneys." "Never mind," replied I, "nobody will read their work; I feel as I ought towards your lordship's friendship, which you cannot prove better than by not naming the subject; it will die away, so will the authors; good morrow, and a thousand thanks." My own books came out one by one: *they* pleased, and I suffered not these tormentors much to vex me. We went on spending our money at and *upon* Streatham Park, till old Mr. Jones and the wise Marquis Trotti advised Piozzi to make the tour of North Wales, and see *my* country, *my* estate, &c. We had been all over Scotland, except the Highlands, where we were afraid of carrying Cecy because of her unsteady health. I staid with dear Mrs. Siddons, at Rose Hill, while our friends made their ramble, and came back as much delighted with Denbighshire and Flintshire as Mr. Thrale had been disgusted with them. This was charming. Piozzi had fixed upon a spot, and resolved to build an Italian villa on the banks of the Clwydd. Even Mr. Murphy applauded the project, and we drew in our expenses, preparing to engage in brick and mortar.

Gout now fastened on Mr. Piozzi, who built his pretty villa in North Wales, and, conforming to our religious opinions, kindly set our little church at Dymarchion in a state it never before enjoyed, spending sums of money on its decoration, and making a vault for my ancestors and for ourselves to repose in. I wrote verses for the opening of our tiny temple, and dear Piozzi set them most enchantingly to music ; our clerk, he said, was a very good genius ; and I trust a more virtuous or pious pleasure could not be felt than ours when teaching those poor people to sing the lines you will read over leaf.

With homely verse and artless lays,
Full oft these humble roofs shall ring ;
Whilst to our dear Redeemer's praise
Rough youths and village maidens sing.

Incarnate God ! when He appeared,
And blessings all around him spread,
Though still by radiant myriads feared,
He chose the poor, the lowly shed.

And sure before He comes again
In awful state to judge the world ;
Resounding choirs though He disdain,
Temples and towers in ruin hurled ;

To unambitious efforts kind,
Pleased He permits our rustic lays ;
Our simple voices, unrefined,
Have leave to sing their Saviour's praise.

The house, our dwelling-house I mean, was built from a design of its elegant master's own hand, and he set poor Bachygraig up too ; repaired and beautified it, and, to please his silly wife, gilt the Llewenny lion on its top. The scroll once held in his paw was broke and gone. Lombardy, where his (Mr. Piozzi's) relations lived, was torn by faction, and his father, a feeble old man of eighty-one years old, equal to one hundred in our island, was actually terrified into apoplexy, lethargy, and death. His son, who half entertained a tender thought that they might meet once

more, grieved for his loss severely, the more so, as he himself said, because ‘*Sarà quel che sarà, ma alla fin, il sangue non e acqua.*’ His brother, I am afraid, joined the Republicans, leaving a very deserving lady, born at Venice, whose friends were wholly ruined, though her uncle, the Abbate Zendrini, was afterwards in high favor, and even appointed confessor to Buonaparte. They had baptized one of their babies by name of John Salusbury in compliment to me, and Mr. Piozzi sent to bring him out of the confusion. He came an infant between three and four years old. We educated him first at Mr. Davis’s school at Streatham, where my own son had been placed so many years before, and then with Mr. Shephard, of Enborne, Berkshire, whence he commonly came to us at Streatham Park, or Bath, or Brynbella.

You know the rest. You know that dear Mr. Piozzi died of the gout at his pretty villa in North Wales. You know that he left me *that*, and everything else, never naming his nephew in the will, only leaving among his father’s children £ 6,000 in the three per cents, being the whole of his savings during the twenty-five years he had shared and enjoyed my fortune. Unexampled generosity indeed! And true love! Could I do less than repay it to the child whose situation in life I now felt responsible for! I bred him with his friends at Oxford, yet he stood alone, *insulated* in a nation where he had no natural friend. Incapacitated to return where his religion would have rendered him miserable, and petted and spoiled till any profession would have been painful. What could I do? The boy had besides all this formed an attachment to his friend’s sister. What could I do? You know what I *did* do. I gave them my estate; and resolving that Mr. Thrale’s daughters should suffer as little as possible by this arrangement, I repaired and new fronted their house at Streatham Park, and by the enormous expense incurred *there*, and the loss of my rents from Denbighshire and Flintshire, reduced myself to the very wretched state *you found* me in, and lavished upon me a friendship, which, at the sauciest hour of my life, would by *my* mind have been esteemed an honor, but in this sad, deserted stage of it the *truest*, very near *the only cordial*. Thus then, as Adam says to Raphael in Milton’s “Paradise Lost”:—

" *Thus* have I told thee all my state; and brought
My story to that sum of earthly bliss
Which *I* enjoy; and since at length to *part*,
Go ; sent of heaven, angelic messenger,
Gentle to *me*, and affable hath been
Thy conversation, to be honored ever
With grateful memory,"

by H. L. Piozzi.

THRALE'S WILL. — SALE OF THE BREWERY.

“WE read the will to-day.” — *Johnson to Mrs. Thrale*, April 5, 1781.

It was neither kind or civil, you will say, to open the will in my absence, but Mr. Thrale had been both civil and kind in laboring to restore to me the Welsh estate, which I had meant to give him in our moments of uneasiness when I became possessed of it by Sir Thomas Salusbury's death, from whom we had once expected Offley Place in Hertfordshire, and all its wide domain. Notwithstanding that disappointment, my husband left me the interest of £ 50,000 for my life, doubtless in return for my diligence during our distresses in 1772, because it is specified to be given over and above what was provided in our marriage settlement. He left me also the plate, pictures, and linen of both houses, forgetting even to name Brighthelmstone, so all I had bought for *that* place fell to the ladies (who said loudly what a wretched match their *poor* papa had made). It was not so, however. Mr. Thrale had received the rents and profits from Wales, £ 9,000, and had cut timber for £ 4,000 more. My mother and my aunts, and an old Doctor Bernard Wilson, had left me £ 5,000 among them, more or less, and I carried £ 10,000 in my hand, so that the family was benefited by me £ 28,000 at the lowest, besides having been, as King Richard expresses it,

“A jack-horse in their great affairs.”

On Mr. Thrale's death I kept the counting-house from nine o'clock every morning till five o'clock every evening till June, when God Almighty sent us a knot of rich Quakers who bought the whole, and saved me and my coadjutors from brewing ourselves into another bankruptcy, which hardly could, I think, have been avoided, being, as we were five in number, Cator, Crutchley, Johnson, myself, and Mr. Smith, all with equal power, yet all

incapable of using it without help from Mr. Perkins, who wished to force himself into partnership, though hating the whole lot of us, save only *me*. Upon my promise, however, that if he would find us a purchaser, I would present his wife with my dwelling-house at the Borough, and all its furniture, he soon brought forward these Quaker Barclays, from Pennsylvania I believe they came, — her own relations I have heard, — and they obtained the brewhouse a prodigious bargain, but Miss Thrale was of my mind to part with it for £ 150,000 ; and I am sure I never did repent it, as certainly it was best for us five females at the time, although the place has now doubled its value, and although men have almost always spirit to spend, while women show greater resolution to spare.

Will it surprise you now to hear that, among all my fellow-executors, *none* but Johnson opposed selling the concern ? Cator, a rich timber merchant, was afraid of implicating his own credit as a commercial man. Crutchley hated Perkins, and lived upon the verge of a quarrel with him every day while they acted together. Smith cursed the whole business, and wondered what his relation, Mr. Thrale, could mean by leaving him £ 200, he said, and such a burden on his back to bear for it. All were well pleased to find themselves secured, and the brewhouse *decently*, though not *very* advantageously disposed of, except dear Doctor Johnson, who found some odd delight in signing drafts for hundreds and for thousands, to him a new, and as it appeared delightful, occupation. When all was nearly over, however, I cured his honest heart of its incipient passion for trade, by letting him into *some*, and *only* some, of its mysteries. The plant, as it is called, was sold, and I gave God thanks upon Whit Sunday, 1781, for sparing me farther perplexity, though at the cost of a good house, &c.

THE CHARMING S. S.

“So you may set the Streatfield at defiance.” — *Johnson*, Oct. 15, 1778; *Letters*, Vol. II. p. 20.

My dear and ever honored Doctor Collier was the cause of my making this Miss Streatfield's acquaintance. I had learned from others that he dropped into her hands soon as dismissed from mine; and that he gained rather than lost by the exchange had long been my secret consolation. She was but fourteen or fifteen when they first met, and he was growing sickly. She did her own way, and her way was to wait on *him*, who instructed her in Greek, and who obtained from her excess of tenderness for him, what I could not have bestowed. I have heard her say she grudged his old valet the happiness of reaching him a glass of wine, and out of her house did he never more make his residence, but died in her arms, and was buried at her expense, the moment she came of age.* All these accounts did I never cease listening to, till I observed my beautiful friend, not contented with her legitimate succession to the heart of Doctor Collier, was endeavoring to supplant me in the esteem of Mr. Thrale, whose good opinion, assailed vainly by Baretti, it was my business and my bounden duty to retain. Miss Thrale, now Lady Keith, was in *this* case my coadjutor; though she had acted in concert with Baretti, she abhorred this attack of Miss Streatfield, who was very dangerous indeed, both from her beauty and learning. Wit she possessed none of, and was as ignorant as an infant of

* The attachment inspired by Dr. Collier in both his pupils resembles that of Stella and Vanessa for Swift, the growth of which is described in the Dean's best poem, “Cadenus and Vanessa”: —

“I knew by what you said and writ
How dang'rous things were men of wit:
You cautioned me against their charms,
But never gave me equal arms.
Your lessons found the weakest part,
Aimed at the head, but reached the heart.”

“That which before us lies in daily life.”

No wonder Mr. Thrale, whose *mind* wanted some new object, since he had lost his son, and lost beside the pleasure he had taken in his business, before all knowledge of it was shared with *myself*, — no wonder that he encouraged a sentimental attachment to Sophia Streatfield, who became daily more and more dear to him, and almost necessary. No one who visited us missed seeing his preference of her to me; but she was so amiable and so sweet-natured, no one appeared to blame him for the unusual and unrepressed delight he took in her agreeable society. I was exceedingly oppressed by pregnancy, and saw clearly my successor in the fair S. S. as we familiarly called her in the family, of which she now made constantly a part, and stood godmother to my newborn baby, by bringing which I only helped to destroy my own health, and disappoint my husband, who wanted a son. “Why Mr. Thrale is Peregrinus Domi,” said Dr. Johnson; “he lives in Clifford Street, I hear, all winter;” and so he did, leaving his carriage at his sister’s door in Hanover Square, that no inquirer might hurt his favorite’s reputation; which my behavior likewise tended to preserve from injury, and we lived on together as well as we could. Miss Browne, who sung enchantingly, and had been much abroad; Miss Burney, whose powers of amusement were many and various, were *my* companions then at Streatham Park, with Doctor Johnson, who wanted me to be living at the Borough, because less inconvenient to *him*, so he said I passed my winter in Surrey, “feeding my chickens and starving my understanding;” but 1779, and the summer of it was coming, to bring on us a much more serious calamity.

THRALE'S ILLNESS.

"YOUR account of Mr. Thrale's illness is very terrible." — *Johnson*, June 14, 1770 ; *Letters*, Vol. II. p. 47.

My account of Mr. Thrale's illness had every reason to be terrible. He had slept at Streatham Park, and left it after breakfast, looking as usual.

His sister's husband, Mr. Nesbitt, often mentioned in these Letters and Memoirs, had been dead perhaps a fortnight. *He* was commercially connected, I knew, with Sir George Colebrook and Sir Something Turner ; but that was all I knew, — and that was nothing. I knew of nothing between Thrale and them till *after my return from Italy*, and was the more perhaps shocked and amazed when, sitting after dinner with Lady Keith and Doctor Burney and his daughter, I believe, my servant Sam opened the drawing-room door with *un air effaré*, saying : " My master is come home, but there is something amiss." I started up, and saw a tall, black female figure, who cried, " Don't go into the library, don't go in I say." My rushing by her somewhat rudely was all her prohibition gained ; but there sat Mrs. Nesbitt holding her brother's hand, who I perceived knew not a syllable of what was passing. So I called Dr. Burney, begged him to fly in the post-chaise, which was then waiting for him, and send me some physician, Sir R. Jebb or Pepys, or if none else could be found, my old accoucheur, Doctor Bromfield of Gerard Street. 'T was *he* that came ; and, convincing me it was an apoplectic seizure, acted accordingly, while the silly ladies went home quite contented I believe : only Mrs. Nesbitt said she thought he was *delirious* ; and from her companion I learned that he had dined at their house, had seen the will opened, and had dropped as if lifeless from the dinner-table ; when, instead of calling help, they called their carriage, and brought him five or six miles out of town in that condition. Would it not much enrage one ? From this dreadful sit-

uation medical art relieved Mr. Thrale, but the natural disposition to conviviality degenerated into a preternatural desire for food, like Erisicthon of old

“Cibus omnis in illo

Causa cibi est; semperque locus inanis edendo.”

It was a distressing moment, and the distress increasing perpetually, nor could any one persuade our patient to believe, or at least to *acknowledge*, he ever had been ill. With a *person*, the very wretched wreck of what it had been, no one could keep him at home. Dinners and company engrossed all his thoughts, and dear Dr. Johnson encouraged him in them, that *he* might not appear *wise*, or predicting his friend's certainly accelerated dissolution.

Death of the baby *boy* I carried in my bosom, was the natural consequence of the scene described here ; but I continued to carry him till a quarrel among the clerks, which I was called to pacify, made a complete finish of the *child* and nearly of me. The men were reconciled though, and my danger accelerated their reconciliation.

DEATH OF THRALE.

“IT was by bleeding till he fainted that his life was saved.” — *Johnson*, Aug. 24, 1780 ; *Letters*, Vol. II. p. 185.

Here is another allusion to that famous bleeding which certainly in Southwark did save the life of Mr. Thrale, and by its *immediate effects* ruined my nerves forever.

Sir Richard, however, said : “ We have paid his heavy debt this time, but he must eat prudently in future.” No one however could control his appetite, which Sir Lucas Pepys, who was at Brighthelmstone, observing, commanded us to town, and took a house not 100 yards from his own for us, in Grosvenor Square, and I went every day to the Borough, whence Lancaster, a favorite clerk third in command, was run away with £ 1,850. Thither poor Doctor Delap followed me, begging a prologue to his new play, and I remember composing it in the coach, as I was driving up and down after Lancaster ; but my business in Southwark was of far severer import.

Some fellow had incited our master to begin a new and expensive building to the amount of £ 20,000, after the progress of which he was ever inquisitive, and kept the plan of it in his bed-chamber. So little did Dr. Johnson even *then* comprehend the strict awe I stood in of my first husband, that I well recollect his saying to me, “ Madam ! you should tear that foolish paper down : why ’t is like leaving a wench’s love-letter in the apartments of a man whom you would wish to cure of his amorous passion.” God knows I durst as well encounter death as disturb Mr. Thrale’s love-letters or his building plans. The next grand agony was seeing him send out cards of invitation to a concert and supper on the 5th of April. He had himself charged Piozzi, who was the first to tell me, with care of the musical part of our entertainment, and had himself engaged the Parsees, a set of Orientals, who were shown at all the gay houses, — the lions of

the day. I could but call my coadjutors, Jebb and Pepys; who tried to counteract this frolic, but in vain. They were obliged to compromise the matter by making him promise to leave town for Streatham immediately after the 5th. "Leave London! lose my Ranelagh season!" exclaimed their patient. "Why, Sir, we wished you to be here, that our attendance might be more regular, and less expensive: but since we find you thus unmanageable, you are safest at a distance." *Now*, Johnson first began to see, or *say* he saw the danger, but *now* his lectures upon temperance came all too late. Poor Mr. Thrale answered him only by inquiring when lamprey season would come in? requesting Sir Philip, who was dining with us, to write his brother, the Prebendary of Worcester, a letter, begging from *him* the first fish of that kind the Severn should produce. I winked at Sir Philip, but he, following us women half up stairs, said: "I understand you, Madam, but *must* disobey. A friend I have known thirty-six years shall not ask a favor of me in his last stage of life and be refused. What difference can it make?" Tears stood in *his* eyes, and my own prevented all answer. In effect, that day was Mr. Thrale's last! I saw him in Sir Richard's arms at midnight. Pepys came at ten, and never left the house till early light showed me the way to Streatham: and from thence, hoping still less disturbance, to Brighthelmstone: where we had a dwelling-house of our own, and whither you will see the letters all addressed.

This was thirty-four or thirty-five years ago, yet did I never completely recover my strength of body or of mind again. I am sure I never did! The shocks of 1780 and 1781 are not *yet* either recovered or forgotten by poor H. L. P.

DR. COLLIER.

“Poor dear Dr. Collier.” — *Letters*, Vol. II. p. 183.

Perhaps this is no improper place to observe that La Bruyère tells his readers with confidence how the firmest friendships will be always dissolved by the intervention of love seizing the heart of either party.* It may be so ; but certainly the sentiment with which dear Dr. Collier inspired me in 1757 remains unaltered now, in the year 1815. After my father’s death my kind and prudent mother, resolving I should marry Mr. Thrale, and fearing possibly lest my Preceptor should foment any disinclination which she well knew would melt in her influence, or die in her displeasure, resolved to part us, and we met no more ; but never have I failed remembering *him* with a preference as completely distinct from the venerating solicitude which hung heavily over my whole soul whilst connected with Dr. Johnson, as it was from the strong connubial duty that tied my every thought to Mr. Thrale’s interest, or from the fervid and attractive passion which made twenty years passed in Piozzi’s enchanting society seem like a happy dream of twenty hours. My first friend formed my mind to resemble *his*. It never *did* resemble that of either of my husbands, and in that of Doctor Johnson’s mine was swallowed up and lost. O, true were these words, put together so long ago : —

“The sentiment I feel for you
No power on earth shall e’er subdue;
No power on earth shall e’er remove,
Nor pungent grief nor ardent love.”

Sophia Streatfield too, if yet living, will bear testimony to the strange power of Doctor Arthur Collier over the minds of his

* “No friend like to a woman man discovers,
So that they have not been, nor may be, lovers.”

youthful pupils when past seventy years old, and to the day of his *death*, which when I knew her, she lamented annually, by wearing a black dress, &c. If he did not burn my letters, Latin exercises, &c., she possesses them.

Mr. Thrale's passion for *her* she played with ; a little perhaps diverting herself by mortifying *me*, but there was no harm done, I am confident. He thought her a thing at least semi-celestial ; had he once found her out a mere mortal woman, his flame would have blazed out no more. And it *did* blaze frightfully indeed during one dreadful attack of the apoplexy at our Borough house, alluded to in these Letters, page 178, when by Sir Richard Jebb's conditional permission, Shaw the apothecary bled Mr. Thrale *usque ad deliquium*, and I thought all over. When, however, temporary and apparent recovery followed the horrid process of stimulating cataplasms which awakened him from carus to delirium, that delirium only appeased by bleeding quite to faintness ; when he had remained mute five long days ; not speaking a consolatory word to one of us, — friends, sisters, daughters, clerks, physicians, — no sooner was Sophy Streatfield's voice heard in Southwark than our patient sat up in bed, conversed with *her* without hesitation, and even said, with a complimentary smile, kissing her hand, that the visit she had made that day, had repaid all his sufferings. It was from this attack, when he recovered, that Lawrence, Jebb, &c., sent us to Bath, whence rioters dislodged and drove us to Brighthelmstone. From thence we returned to London ; a ready-furnished house in Grosvenor Square being thought the best place by medical advisers, while Perkins assured Doctor Johnson that his master would be *safest*, in every respect, at a *distance* from his *business*.

MINOR MARGINAL NOTES ON THE TWO VOLUMES OF PRINTED LETTERS.*

Mr. Seward. — Mr. Seward, who wrote the “Anecdotes;” he was only son to a rich brewer, whom he disappointed and grieved by his preference of literature to riches. His head, however, was not quite right. I believe his principles were vitiated by his studies among the Swiss infidels: Helvetius, D’Alembert, and the rest of them. He kept his morality pure for the sake of his health perhaps, for he was a professed valetudinarian.

Mr. Keep. — Mr. Keep, when he heard I was a native of North Wales, told me that *his* wife was a Welshwoman, and desired to be buried at Ruthyn. “So,” says the man, “I went with the corpse myself, because I thought it would be a *pleasant journey*, and indeed I found Ruthyn a very beautiful place.”

Sir Robert Chambers. — The box goes to Calcutta to Sir Robert Chambers, a favorite with them all. (I never could see why.) He was judge in India, married Fanny Wilton, the statuary’s daughter, who stood for Hebe at the Royal Academy. She was very beautiful indeed, and but fifteen years old when Sir Robert married her. His portrait is in the Library at Streatham Park. 1815.

Bath is often mentioned in these letters, but I forgot among the baby anecdotes which precede them, to say how I remembered being carried about the rooms by Beau Nash, and taken notice of by Lady Caroline, mother to the famous Charles James Fox.

On Johnson’s writing to congratulate her on making the con-

* The name, or passage, suggesting the note is given when required for its elucidation.

quest of the Prince of Castiglione, she writes : " The man who drank his health by name of Mr. Vagabond."

Whitbread. — Would you for the other thousand have my master such a man as Whitbread? Father to the man who killed himself. He asked me to marry him after Mr. Thrale's death, when his fortune was much increased : on my refusal (he had three children) Lady Mary Cornwallis accepted his hand, and brought him a daughter before she died.

" But I long to see £ 20,000 in the bank." — *Johnson.*

Ay, so did I, but not one shilling was found by the executors in *any* place, except a trifle for present use at the banker's shop ; £ 6,000, no *more* ; and no estate purchased anywhere. Although Murphy said afterwards that Mr. T. enjoyed a contract, bringing in £ 26,000 a year for three years, of which neither Dr. Johnson nor I, nor Perkins the head clerk, ever heard. I now *know* that to *be true*, but have not known it fifteen years. Mr. Murphy himself witnessed the deed, the contract. Very strange !

" Why should you suspect me of forgetting lilly lolly ? " — *Johnson.*

Ask me about this stuff, and I'll try to tell you : come, here it is. One of our Welsh squires had a half-witted son, — his sole heir, poor fellow ! and the parents fondled it accordingly. When Christmas came, and all the country was invited at Llewenny Hall, the seat of my mother's *eldest* brother, who married Lady Elizabeth Tollemache, came these dear Wynnes and their booby boy about eleven years old. " What does the child say ? " cries my aunt, " it sounds like lilly lolly." " Indeed, my Lady Betty," replies the mother, in a sharp Welsh accent, " Dick does *say* lilly lolly, sure enough : but he *mains* : How do you do, Sir Robert Cotton ? " I had probably in some unprinted letter said : " Here 's a deal of lilly lolly, which I suppose you forget, but *it means*, How do you do, Dr. Johnson ? "

Footnote. — " Did you see Foote at Brighthelmstone ? — Did you think he would so soon be gone ? — Life, says Falstaff, is a shuttle.

He was a fine fellow in his way; and the world is really impoverished by his sinking glories. Murphy ought to write his life, at least to give the world a Footeana. Now, will any of his contemporaries bewail him? Will Genius change *his sex* to weep? I would really have his life written with diligence." * — *Johnson*.

Doctor Johnson was not aware that Foote broke his heart because of a hideous detection; he was trying to run away from England, and from infamy, but death stopped him. Doctor Johnson never could persuade himself that things were as bad as the sufferer or his friends represented them; he thought it *wrong* to believe so, and steadily made the best on 't.

Richardson. — "Doctor Johnson said, that if Mr. Richardson had lived till *I* came out, my praises would have added two or three years to his life: 'For,' says Dr. Johnson, 'that fellow died merely for want of change among his flatterers: he perished for want of *more*, like a man obliged to breathe the same air till it is exhausted.'"

"Here is Mr. —, now Sir William, however, who talks all about taste, and classics, and country customs, and rural sports, with rapture, which he perhaps fancies unaffected, — was riding by our chaise on the Downs yesterday, and said, because the sun shone, that one could not perceive it was autumn; 'for,' says he, 'there is not one tree in sight to show us the fall of the leaf; and hark! how that sweet bird sings,' continued he, 'just like the first week in May.' 'No, no,' replied I, 'that's nothing but a poor robin-redbreast, whose chill wintry note tells the season too plainly, without assistance from the vegetable kingdom.' 'Why, you amaze me,' quoth our friend; 'I had no notion of *that*.' Yet Mrs. — says, this man is a natural converser, and Mrs. — is an honorable lady." — *Letters*, Vol. II. p. 33.

The blanks are filled up with the names of Pepys and Montagu.

* A very able essay on the "Life and Character of Foote" has been written by Mr. Forster, who clears his memory of the calumny which shortened his life.

The Burneys.—Doctor Burney and his family are often spoken of in these Memoirs. He was a man of very uncommon attainments: wit born with him, I suppose; learning, he had helped himself to, and was proud of the possession; elegance of manners he had so cultivated, that those who knew but little of the *man*, fancied he had great flexibility of mind. It was mere pliancy of body, however, and a perpetual show of obsequiousness by bowing incessantly as if *acknowledging* an inferiority, which nothing would have forced him to *confess*. I never in my life heard Johnson pronounce the words, “I beg your pardon, Sir,” to any human creature but the apparently soft and gentle Dr. Burney. Perhaps the story may be related in the “Anecdotes;” but as I *now* recollect it, thus it is. “Did you, Madam, subscribe £100 to build our new bridge at Shrewsbury?” said Burney to me. “No, surely, Sir,” was my reply. “What connection have I with Shropshire? and where should I have money so to fling away?” “It is very *comical*, is it not, Sir?” said I, turning to Dr. Johnson, “that people should tell such unfounded stories?” “It is,” answered he, “neither *comical* nor serious, my dear; it is only a wandering lie.” This was spoken in his natural voice, without a thought of offence, I am confident; but up bounced Burney in a towering passion, and to my much amaze, put on the hero, surprising Doctor Johnson into a sudden request for pardon, and protestation of not having ever intended to accuse his friend of a falsehood. The following lines written, *sur le champ*, with a gold pen I gave him, prove he could make more agreeable *impromptus* than this I have related:—

“Such implements, though fine and splendid,
They say can ne’er *write well*:
With common fame that truth is blended,
Let this example tell.

“If bounteous Thrale could thus confer
Her learning, sense, and wit;
Who would not wish a gift from her,
Who — not to beg — submit?

“Paupers from Grub Street at her gate
Would crowd both young and old,

In humble guise to supplicate
For thoughts, not pens, of gold.

“ For not alone the gift of tongues,
The Muses’ grace and favor,
Adorn her prose, and on her songs
Bestow the Attic flavor.

“ The Virtues all around her wait
T’ infuse their influence mild ;
And every duty regulate
Of parent, wife, and child.

“ Such judgment to direct each storm,
Each hurricane to weather ;
A mind so pure, a heart so warm,
How seldom found together ! ”

There was a merry tale told about the town of some musical nobleman having been refused tickets for his private concert about this time by blind Stanley, who he had always patronized ; and of his going to a grave friend’s, I forget who, where, foaming with anger, he at length exclaimed : “ But I will go to Burney’s house to-night (where there was music), and that will *do* for him.” “ Are you mad, my dear Lord ? ” says the grave man, amazed ; “ to talk of setting a blind man’s house on fire, because he has refused your favorite girl a ticket ? Fie ! fie ! I am ashamed of listening to such strange things.” The *équivoque* was now well understood ; but having no acquaintance with the doctor, the gentleman thought he had menaced going to *burn his* house.

We had been talking of the French rondeaux one day, and *both* doctors said they were impracticable in English, so I made *this*, — Musa loquitur : —

To *burn ye* with rapture, or melt you with pity,
A rondeau was never intended :
Yet the lines should be light, and the turn should be witty.
And the jest is to see how ’t is ended.
To finish it neat in an elegant style
Though Phœbus himself should discern ye ;

And though to throw light on the troublesome toil,
 Should he shine hot enough for to burn ye,
 You still would be vexed,
 Incumbered, perplexed,
 So teizing the rhymes would return ye :
 In a fit of despair
 Then this moment forbear,
 And let me some humility learn ye :
 Leave writing with ease,
 And each talent to please,
 And making of rondeaux — to *Burney*.

“ VOITURE’S FAMOUS RONDEAU,

“ Ma foi, c’est fait de moi, car Isabeau
 M’a conjuré de lui faire un rondeau ;
 Cela me met dans une peine extrême,
 Quoi ! treize vers, huit en eau, cinq en ème !
 Je lus ferois aussitôt un bateau.

“ En voila cinq pourtant en un monceau
 Faisons en huit — en invoquant brodéau ;
 Et puis mettons, par quelque stratagème
 Ma foi c’est fait.

“ Si je pouvois encore de mon cerveau
 Tirer cinq vers, l’ouvrage seroit beau ;
 Mais cependant je suis dedans l’onzième
 Et si je crois que je fais le douzième
 En voila treize ajustès au niveau,
 Ma foi c’est fait,”

is borrowed from a sonnet of Lope de Vega, admirably imitated in our collection of poems called “ Dodsley’s Miscellanies ” : —

“ SONETO.

“ Un soneto me manda hazer Violante
 Que en mi vida me he visto en tanto aprieto.
 Catorze versos dicen que es soneto
 Burla burlando van los tres delante.

“ Yo pensè que no hallara consonante
 Y estoy a la mitad de otro quarteto ;

Mas si me veo en el primo terceto,
No ay cosa en los quartetos que me espante.

“ Per el primo terceto voy entrando
Y aun parece que entrè con pie derecho,
Pues fin con este verso le voy dando.

“ Ya estoy en el segundo, y aun sospecho
Que vòy los treze versos acabando
Contad si son catorze, y esta echo.”

“ IMITATION BY MR. RODERICK.

“ Capricious Wray a sonnet needs must have, —
I ne’er was so put to ’t before, — a sonnet !
Why fourteen verses must be spent upon it,
’Tis good, howe’er, to have conquered the first stave.

“ Yet I shall ne’er find rhymes enough by half,
Said I ; and found myself in midst of the second :
If twice four verses were but fairly reckoned,
I should turn back on the hardest part, and laugh.

“ Thus far with good success, I think, I’ve scribbled,
And of the twice seven lines have clean got o’er ten ;
Courage ! another ’ll finish the first triplet.
Thanks to the Muse, my work begins to shorten,
There’s thirteen lines got o’er driblet by driblet :
’Tis done ; count how you will, I ’ll warrant there’s fourteen.” *

“ I begin now to let loose my mind after Queeney and Burney.” — *Johnson*, June 19, 1779.

They were learning Latin of him ; but Dr. Burney would not let *his* girl (Madam D’Arblay) go on : he thought grammar too masculine a study for misses.

“ I shall be in danger of crying out, with Mr. Head, *catamaran* whatever that may mean.” — *Johnson*.

A comical hack joke. Ask me, and I will tell you one or *two* more tales about catamaran. Come ; here it is : You do not

* These trifles are principally curious as showing what clever people have thought clever. To borrow Johnson’s words, many men, many women, or many children might have written either of the three.

hate nonsense with affected fastidiousness, or fastidious affectation, like those who have little sense. Turn the page, then, over.

This Mr. *Head*, whose real name was *Phunkett*, a low Irish parasite, dependant on Mr. Thrale primarily; and I suppose, secondarily on Mr. Murphy, was employed by them in various schemes of pleasure, as you men call profligacy; and on this occasion was deputed to amuse them by personating some *lord*, whom his patrons had promised to introduce to the beautiful Miss Gunnings when they first came over with intent to make their fortunes. He was received accordingly, and the girls played off their best airs, and cast kind looks on his introducers from time to time; till the fellow wearied, as Johnson says, and disgusted with his ill-acted character, burst out on a sudden as they sat at tea, and cried, "Catamaran! young gentlemen with two shoes and never a heel; when will you have done with silly jokes now? *Lèdies*;" turning to the future peeresses, "never mind these merry boys; but if you really can afford to pay for some incomparable silk stockings, or true India handkerchiefs, *here they are now*," rummaging his smuggler's pocket; but the girls jumped up and turned them all three into the street, where Thrale and Murphy cursed their senseless assistant, and called him *Head*, like *lucus a non lucendo*, because they swore he had none. The Duchess (of Hamilton), however, never did forgive this impudent frolic; Lady Coventry, more prudently, pretended to forget it.

Catamaran! was probably a mere Irish exclamation which burst from the fellow when impatient to be selling his smuggled goods. There is exactly such a character in Richardson's "*Clarissa*," — Captain Tomlinson, employed by Lovelace.

"You and Mrs. — must keep Mrs. — about you; and try to make a wit of her. She will be a little unskilful in her first essays; but you will see how precept and example will bring her forwards. Surely it is very fine to have your powers. The wits court you, and the Methodists love you, and the whole world runs about you; and you write me word how well you can do without me; and so, go thy ways poor Jack." — *Johnson*, April 15, 1780.

The names are filled with those of Mrs. Montague and Mrs.

Byron. It would seem that Johnson was of opinion with Sidney Smith, who contends in his lectures that wit may be acquired like other talents or accomplishments.

“But —— and you have had, with all your adulations, nothing finer said of you than was said last Saturday night of Burke and me. We were at the Bishop of ——’s, a bishop little better than *your* bishop; and towards twelve we fell into talk, to which the ladies listened, just as they do to you; and said, as I heard, *there is no rising unless somebody will cry fire.*” — Johnson, May 23, 1780.

The lady was Mrs. Montague; Johnson’s bishop was the Bishop of St. Asaph (Shipley); Mrs. P.’s, the Bishop of Peterborough (Hinchliffe).

Mrs. Piozzi replies: “I have no care about enjoying undivided empire, nor any thoughts of disputing it with Mrs. Montagu. She considers her title as indisputable, most probably, though I am sure I never heard her urge it. Queen Elizabeth, you remember, would not suffer hers to be inquired into, and I have read somewhere that the Great Mogul is never crowned.”

In a postscript she says: “Apropos to gallantry, here is a gentleman hooted out of Bath for showing a lady’s love-letters to him; and such is the resentment of all the females, that even the housemaid refused to make his bed. I think them perfectly right, as he has broken all the common ties of society; and if he were to sleep on straw for half a year instead of our old favorites the Capucin friars, it would do him no harm, and set the men a good example.”

In the margin is written “Mr. Wade.”

“Gluttony is, I think, less common among women than among men. Women commonly eat more sparingly, and are less curious in the choice of meat; but if once you find a woman gluttonous, expect from her very little virtue. Her mind is enslaved to the lowest and grossest temptation.

“Of men, the examples are sufficiently common. I had a friend, of great eminence in the learned and the witty world,

who had hung up some pots on his wall to furnish nests for sparrows. The poor sparrows, not knowing his character, were seduced by the convenience, and I never heard any man speak of any future enjoyment with such contortions of delight as he exhibited, when he talked of eating the young ones." — *Johnson*.

The name of Isaac Hawkins Browne is written in the margin, and it is added that the young sparrows were eaten in a pie.

Stonehenge. — I saw Stonehenge once before this letter was written, in company of my father, who said it was Druidical: I saw it again seven years or more, *ten* years perhaps, in company of my second husband, and I saw it with Miss Thrales in June, 1784. I fancy it was Saxon for my own part; a monument to the valor of Hengist. It is *Stone Henge*.

"Mrs. Davenant says, that you regain your health. That you regain your health is more than a common recovery; because I infer, that you regain your peace of mind. Settle your thoughts and control your imagination, and think no more of Hesperian felicity. Gather yourself and your children into a little system, in which each may promote the ease, the safety, and pleasure of the rest." — *Johnson*.

Mrs. D'Avenant neither knew nor cared, as she wanted her brother Harry Cotton to marry Lady Keith, and I offered my estate with her. Miss Thrale said she wished to have nothing to do either with my family or my fortune. They were all cruel and all insulting.

"DEAR SIR, — Communicate your letters regularly. Your father's inexorability not only grieves but amazes me. He is your father. He was always accounted a wise man; nor do I remember anything to the disadvantage of his good-nature; but in his refusal to assist you there is neither good-nature, fatherhood, nor wisdom." — *Johnson*.

I think you will be surprised to hear that this so serious letter should have been written to the crazy fellow, of whom a ludicrous story is told in the "*Anecdotes*:" Joe Simson, as Doctor Johnson called him, when he related the ridiculous incidents of

his marriage, his kept mistress, his footman, and himself; all getting so drunk with the nuptial bowl of punch, purchased with borrowed money, that the hero of the tale tumbled down stairs and broke his leg or arm, I forget which, and sent for Doctor Johnson to assist him. He had another friend of much the same description, though this gentleman was a lawyer: the other, a poet. Boyce was the author of some pretty things in the "Gentleman's Magazine," and Johnson showed me the following verses in manuscript, which I translated: but which are not half so pleasant as was his account of Mr. Boyce lying a-bed: not for lack of a shirt, because he seldom wore one; supplying the want with white paper wristbands: but for want of his scarlet cloak, laced with gold, his usual covering; which lay unredeemed at the pawnbrokers. The verses were addressed to Cave, of St. John's Gate, who saved him from prison *that* time at least: —

"Hodie, teste Cœlo summo
Sine pane, sine nummo;
Sorte positus infeste
Scribo tibi dolens mæste:
Fame, bile, tamet jecur,
Urbane! mitte opem precor:
Tibi enim cor humanum
Non à malis alienum;
Mihi mens nec male grato,
Pro a te favore dato.
Ex gehennâ debitoria,
Vulgò, domo spongiatoria."

O witness Heaven for me this day
That I've no pelf my debts to pay:
No bread, nor halfpenny to buy it,
No peace of mind or household quiet.
My liver swelled with bile and hunger
Will burst me if I wait much longer.
Thou hast a heart humane they say,
O then a little money — pray.
Nor further press me on my fate
And fix me at the begging grate:
Sufficient in this hell to souse
Vulgarly called a sponging house.

Of this curious creature I have heard Johnson tell how he remained fasting three whole days ; and at the end when his consoling friend brought him a nice beefsteak, how he refused to touch it till the dish (he had no plate) had been properly rubbed over with *shalot*. “What inhabitants this world has in it!”

“You were kind in paying my forfeits at the club ; it cannot be expected that many should meet in the summer, however they that continue in town should keep up appearances as well as they can. I hope to be again among you.” — *Johnson*.

There is a story of poor dear Garrick, whose attention to his money-stuff never forsook him, — relating that when *his* last day was drawing to an end, *he* begged a gentleman present to pay his club forfeits, “and don’t let them cheat you,” added he, “for there cannot be above nine, and they will make out ten.”

At the end of the second volume of “Letters” are printed several translations from Boëthius, the joint performances of Dr. Johnson and Mrs. Piozzi. She has written on the last leaf: —

Book 3d, Metre 7, being completely my own, I would not print, though Dr. Johnson commended my doing it so well, and said he could not make it either more close or more correct: —

That pleasure leaves a parting pain
Her veriest votaries maintain ;
Soon she deposits all her sweets,
Soon like the roving bee retreats,
Hasty, like her, she mounts on wing,
And, like her, leaves th’ envenomed sting.

In reference to the second line in this couplet: —

Fondly viewed his following bride,
Viewing lost, and losing died, —

she remarks: —

And this beautiful line, which I *saw him* compose, “you will find,” said I, “in Fletcher’s *Bonduca*.” “Impossible,” replies Dr. Johnson, “I never read a play of Beaumont and Fletcher’s in my life.” This passed in Southwark: when we went to

Streatham Park, I took down the volume and showed him the line.

There is an allusion to this incident in the "Thraliana," and the entry is an additional illustration of the variety of her knowledge and the tenacity of her memory. It refers to Dr. Parker's complimentary verses describing an imaginary request of Apollo to the Graces and Muses to admit her of their number, and concluding with these lines : —

"Henceforth acknowledge every pen
The Graces *four*, the Muses *ten*."

For a long time (she writes) I thought this conceit original, but it is not. There is an old Greek epigram only of two lines which the doctor has here spun into length (*vide* "Anthol." lib. 7), and there is some account of it too in Bonhours.

What, however, is much more extraordinary, is that the famous Tristram Shandy itself is not absolutely original ; for when I was at Derby in the summer of 1744, I strolled by mere chance into a bookseller's shop, where, however, I could find nothing to tempt curiosity but a strange book about Corporal Bates, which I bought and read for want of better sport, and found it to be the very novel from which Sterne took his first idea. The character of Uncle Toby, the behavior of Corporal Trim, even the name of Tristram itself, seems to be borrowed from this stupid history of Corporal Bates, forsooth. I now wish I had pursued Mr. Murphy's advice of marking down all passages from different books which strike, by their resemblance to each other, as fast as they fell in my way ; for one forgets again, in the hurry and tumult of life's cares and pleasures, almost everything that one does not commit to paper.

The verses written by Bentley upon Learning, and published in Dodsley's Miscellanies, how like they are to Evelyn's verses on Virtue, published in Dryden's Miscellanies ! yet I do not suppose them a plagiarism. Old Bentley would have scorned such tricks ; besides, what passed once between myself and Mr. Johnson should cure me of suspicion in these cases.

NOTES ON WRAXALL'S "HISTORICAL MEMOIRS OF MY OWN TIME."

I SEND Wraxall with the quartos, that you may read something written *of* your poor friend as well as something written *by* her. His book will be a relief when you get into the dark ages of "Retrospection." — *Mrs. Piozzi to Sir James Fellowes.*

Her note on Wraxall's statement relating to Marie Antoinette's first confinement is : —

You see how cautious Sir N. Wraxall is — but you may likewise see through his caution. *He* knew, no doubt, better than myself, that about this time a swathed baby made of white marble was laid at the bedchamber door, with this inscription : —

"Je ne suis point de Cire — subintelligitur Sire,
Je suis de pierre — subintelligitur Pierre."

A Life Guard Man as I was informed.

The Dauphin, who died very young, and the other, who lived to suffer still more — whom every one pities, are mentioned in the 2d Vol., but I can't find the place now. Ils étoient *vrais Descendants* de Louis XIV., mais comment ? Juste Ciel !

In reference to Wraxall's description of the celebrated women of the day, she has pasted in (besides the verses Vol. I. p. 49) copies of the following : —

THE PLANETS.

(Said to be written by Charles Fox.)

With Devon's girl so blythe and gay,
I well could like to sport and play ;
With Jersey would the time beguile,
With Melbourne titter, sneer, and smile,
With Bouverie one would wish to sin,
With Damer I could only grin :
But to them all I'd bid adieu,
To pass my life and think with Crewe.

THE PLEIADES.

(Said to be written by Mr. Chamberlayne, who threw himself out of the window.)

With charming Cholmondeley well one might
 Pass half the day, and all the night ;
 From Montague's more fertile mind
 Perpetual source of pleasures find :
 Of Tully's Latin, Homer's Greek,
 With learned Carter one could speak ;
 With Thrale converse in purest ease,
 Of letters, life, and languages.
 But if I dare to talk with Crewe,
 My ease, my peace, my heart adieu !
 Sweet Greville ! whose too feeling heart
 By love was once betrayed,
 With Sappho's ardor, Sappho's art,
 For cool indifference prayed :
 Who can endure a prayer from you
 So selfish and confined ?
 You should — when you produced a Crewe,
 Have prayed for all mankind.

The verses on Henrietta de Coligny, Comtesse'de la Suze, are quoted by Wraxall : —

Quæ Dea sublimi vehitur per inania curru ?
 An Juno, an Pallas, an Venus ipsa venit ?
 Si genus inspicias, Juno : si scripta, Minerva :
 Si spectes oculos, Mater Amoris erit.

They are thus paraphrased in a marginal note by Mrs. Piozzi : —

Her birth examined, Juno we discern,
 Her learning not Minerva's self denies :
 From such perfections dazzled should I turn,
 But that Love's mother laughs in both her eyes.

Note. — When the King of Sweden was murdered in a ball-room, by Ankerstroom, about the year 1792, there was a comically impudent caricature published representing George the Third, with a letter in his hand and a label out of his mouth, *What, what, what ! Shot, shot, shot !*

“The last Princess of the Stuart line who reigned in this country, has been accused of similar passion (for drink), if we may believe the secret history of that time, or trust to the couplet which was affixed to the pedestal of her statue in front of St. Paul’s, by the satirical wits of 1714.” — *Wraxall*.

Note. — Brandy-faced Nan has left us in the lurch,
Her face to the brandy shop, and her — to the church.

VERSES ON CATHERINE OF RUSSIA.

Elle fit oublier par un esprit sublime
D’un pouvoir odieux les énormes abus;
Et sur un trône acquis par le crime
Elle se maintint par les vertus.

Her dazzling reign so brightly shone
Few sought to mark the crimes they courted;
Whilst on her ill acquired throne,
She sat by Virtue’s self supported.

“The Countess Cowper was at this time distinguished by his (the Grand Duke Leopold’s) attachment; and the exertion of his interest with Joseph the Second his brother, procured her husband, Lord Cowper, to be created soon afterwards a Prince of the German Empire.” — *Wraxall*.

Note. — She was beautiful when no longer a court favorite, in 1786. Her attachment was then to Mr. Merry, the highly accomplished poet, known afterwards by name of Della Crusca.

“In 1779, Charles Edward exhibited to the world a very humiliating spectacle.” — *Wraxall*.

Note. — Still more so at Florence, in 1786. Count Alfieri had taken away his consort, and he was under the dominion and care of a natural daughter, who wore the Garter, and was called Duchess of Albany. She checked him when he drank too much, or when he talked too much. Poor soul! Though one evening he called Mr. Greatheed up to him, and said in good English, and a loud though cracked voice: ‘I will speak to my own subjects my own way, *sare*. Ay, and I will soon speak to you, Sir, in Westminster Hall.’ The Duchess shrugged her shoulders.

"It was universally believed that he (Rodney) had been distinguished in his youth by the personal attachment of the Princess Amelia, daughter of George the Second, who displayed the same partiality for Rodney which her cousin, the Princess Amelia of Prussia, manifested for Trenck. A living evidence of the former connection existed, unless fame had recourse to fiction for support. But detraction, in every age, from Elizabeth down to the present times, has not spared the most illustrious females." — *Wraxall*.

Note. — Meaning, I suppose, the famous Miss Ashe, who, after many adventures, married Captain Falkner of the Royal Navy. She was a pretty creature, but particularly small in her person. *Little Miss Ashe* was the name she went by, yet I should think Rodney scarce old enough to have been her father. Her *mother* people spoke of with more certainty.

THE LYTTELTON GHOST STORY.

"Lyttelton, when scarcely thirty-six, breathed his last at a country house near Epsom, called Pit Place, from its situation in a chalk-pit; where he witnessed, as he conceived, a supernatural appearance." — *Wraxall*.

Note. — He *did* so; but here the author must pardon me, and so must you, dear Sir, if I presume to say I can tell this tale *better*, meaning with more exactness, for truth constitutes the whole of its value.

Lord Westcote and Lord Sandys both told it *thus*, and they were familiar intimates at Streatham Park, where now their portraits hang in my library.

Lord Lyttelton was in London, and was gone to bed I *think* upon a Thursday night. He rang his bell suddenly and with great violence, and his valet on entering found him much disordered, protesting he had been, or had fancied himself, plagued with a white bird fluttering within his curtains. "When, however (continued he), I seemed to have driven her away, a female figure stood at my feet in long drapery, and said, 'Prepare to die, my Lord; you'll soon be called.' 'How soon? how soon?'"

said I; 'in three years?' 'Three years!' replied she, tauntingly, 'three days!' and vanished." Williams, the man-servant, related this to his friends of course; and the town-talk was all about Lord Lyttelton's dream; he himself ran to his uncle with it, to Lord Westcote, who confessed having reproved him pretty sharply for losing time in the invention of empty stories (such he accounted it), instead of thinking about the speech he was to make a few days after.

Lord Sandys was milder; saying, "My dear fellow, if you believe this strange occurrence, and would have us believe it, be persuaded to change your conduct, and give up that silly frolic which you told us of. I mean going next Sunday, — was it not? to Woodcote; but I suppose 't is only one of your wondrous fine devices to make us plain folks stare; so drink a dish of chocolate and talk of something else."

On Saturday, after we had talked this over at Streatham Park, a lady late from Wales dropt in, and told us she had been at Drury Lane last night. "How were you entertained?" said I. "Very strangely *indeed*," was the reply; "not with the play though, for I scarce knew what they acted, — but with the discourse of Captain Ascough or Askew, — so his companions called him, — who averred that a friend of his, the profligate Lord Lyttelton, as I understood by them, had certainly seen a spirit, who has warned him that he is to die within the next three days, and I have thought of nothing else ever since."

No further accounts reached Streatham Park till Monday morning, when every tongue was telling how a Mrs. Flood and two Miss Amphlets, demirep beauties, had passed over Westminster Bridge by the earliest hour, looking like corpses from illness occasioned by terror, and escorted by this Captain Ascough to town. The man Williams's constant and unvarying tale tallied with *his*, who said they had been passing the time appointed in great gayety; some other girls and gentlemen of the country having in some measure joined the party for dinner only, but leaving these before midnight. That on Sunday Lord Lyttelton drew out his watch at eleven o'clock, and said, "Well, now I *must* leave you, agreeable as all of you are; because I mean to meditate on the next Wednesday's speech, and have actually

brought some books with me." "O, but the ghost! the ghost!" exclaimed one of Miss Amphlets, laughing. "O, don't you see that we have *bilked the bitch*," says Lord Lyttelton, showing his watch, and running from them up stairs, where Williams had set out the reading-table, &c., and put his master on the yellow night-gown, which he always used. Lord Lyttelton then said, "Make up my five grains of rhubarb and peppermint water and leave me; but, did you remember to bring rolls enough from London?" "I brought none, my Lord; I have found a baker here at Epsom that makes them just as your Lordship likes," — describing how, and stirring the mixture as he spoke. "What are you using?" cries my Lord, — "a toothpick!" "A clean one, *indeed*, my Lord." "You lazy devil, — go fetch a spoon directly;" he did so; but heard a noise in the room and hastened back, to find his master fallen over the table, books and all. He raised him; "Speak to me, my Lord, — speak for God's sake, dear my Lord." "Ah, Williams!" was his last and only word. Williams ran down to the dissolute company below, his watch in his hand. "Not twelve o'clock *yet*," he exclaimed, "and dead, — dead."

They all bore witness that no violence came near the man, and I do *think* that some judicial process then proclaimed him, — "Dead by the visitation of God." This, however, might be my hearing those words from friends and acquaintances relating the incident; but when it was reported, twenty years after, that Lord Lyttelton committed suicide, I knew *that* was an error, or a falsity.

Of this event, however, few people spoke after the first bustle; and I had changed my situation and associates so completely, that it lay loose in my mind, — never forgotten, though in a manner unremembered.

Chance, however, threw me into company of the gay and facetious Miles Peter Andrews, with whom and Mr. Greatheed's family, and Mrs. Siddons, and Sir Charles Hotham, and a long et cetera, an entertaining day had been passed some time in the year 1795, if I remember rightly; and Mrs. Merrick Hoare, assuming intimacy, said, "Now, dear Mr. Andrews, that the Pigous are gone, and everybody is gone but ourselves, *do* tell my mother

your *own* story of Lord Lyttelton." He hesitated, and I pressed him, urging my long past acquaintance with his Lordship's uncles, — the bishop and Lord Westcote. He looked uneasily at me, but I soothed, and Sophia gave him no quarter; so with something of an appeal to her that the tale would be as she had learned it from her friends the Pigous and from himself, he began by saying: "Lord Lyttelton and I had lived long in great familiarity, and had agreed that whichever quitted this world first should visit the other. Neither of us being sick, however, such thoughts were at the time of his death, poor fellow! furthest from my mind.

"Lord Lyttelton had asked me to make one of his mad party to Woodcote or Pitt Place, in Surrey, on such a day, but I was engaged to the Pigous you saw this evening, and could not go. They then lived in Hertfordshire; I went down thither on the Sunday, and dined with them and their very few, and very sober friends, who went away in the evening. At eleven o'clock I retired to my apartment: it was broad moonlight and I put out my candle: when just as I seemed dropping asleep, Lord Lyttelton thrust himself between the curtains, dressed in his own yellow night-gown that he used to read in, and said in a mournful tone, '*Ah, Andrews, it's all over.*' 'O,' replied I quickly, 'are you there, you dog?' and recollecting there was but one door to the room, rushed out at it — locked it, and held the key in my hand, calling to the housekeeper and butler, whose voices I heard putting the things away, to ask when Lord Lyttelton arrived, and what trick he was meditating. The servants made answer with much amazement, that no such arrival had taken place; but I assured them I had seen, and spoken to him, and could produce him, 'for here,' said I, '*he is*; under fast lock and key.' We opened the door, and found no one, but in two or three days heard that he died at that very moment, near Epsom in Surrey."

"After a pause, I said very seriously to Mr. Andrews, 'Were you quite sober, Sir?' 'As you are now,' replied he; 'and I did think I saw Lord Lyttelton as I now think that I see you.' '*Did think, Sir? do you now think it?*' 'I should most undoubtedly think it, but that so many people for so many years have told me I did not see him,' said he. We made a few serious reflections and parted."

In reference to Wraxall's appeal to the confirmatory testimony of the Dowager Lady Lyttelton, she adds: "Lady Lyttelton's imagination was supposed stronger than her veracity. She was *scouted* (as the coarse phrase is) by the family, and with good talents was, I fear, little esteemed by any one, though daughter to Sir Robert Rich, and had been pretty."

"‘A day or two before the 7th of June,’ said he, ‘Count Maltzan, then the Prussian Minister at our Court, called on me, and informed me that the mob had determined to attack the Bank.’” — *Wraxall*.

Note. — The foreigners always obtain the first intelligence of everything. It was the Marquis Del Campo who himself informed the Queen of Peg Nicholson's attempt to assassinate George the Third. And one of the ministers of a foreign Court was first to learn the meditated escape of Buonaparte from Elba.*

"Suspicions were thrown on the Earl of Shelburne, probably with great injustice. The natural expectation of producing a change in Ministry was imagined to suspend or supersede in certain minds, every other consideration; and it was even pretended, though on very insufficient grounds that Peers did not scruple to take an active part in the worst excesses of the night of the 7th of June."† — *Wraxall*.

Note. — A man remarkable for duplicity will be always suspected whether deserving suspicion or no. Gainsborough drew Lord Shelburne's portrait: my Lord complained it was not like. The painter said "*he* did not approve it, and begged to try again." Failing *this* time, however, he flung away his pencil saying, "D—— it, I never could see through varnish, and there's an end."

* This is far from clear. The Duke of Wellington told Rogers that *he* got the first intelligence from the English minister at Florence. It is one of the most curious cases of conflicting evidence that can be named. See the *Edinburgh Review*, No. 227. (July, 1860), pp. 235, 236.

† It was a current story, which I have heard Lord Macaulay relate, that the late Right Honorable T. Grenville was with a party that broke into the Admiralty, and that the *second* time he entered it was as First Lord.

"Sir Fletcher Norton, though perhaps justly accused, as a professional man, of preferring profit to conscientious delicacy of principle; and though denominated in the coarse satires or caricatures of that day, by the epithet of 'Sir Bullface Doublefee;' yet possessed eminent parliamentary, as well as legal talents." — *Wraxall*.

Note.— One of which I remember, except the second line, which is not exact :

"Careless of censure, and no fool to fame,
Firm in his double post and double fees;
Sir Fletcher standing without fear or shame,
Pockets the cash, and lets them laugh that please.

"So on a market day, stands Whatley's bear,
In spite of all their noise and hurly burley;
Fixed on his double post, secure in air,
Munching his bunch of grapes, and looking surly."

The Bear at Devizes was then kept by one Whatley, and stood upon a monstrous double signpost high up in the air, when some wag wrote these verses with a diamond on the window of an eating-room belonging to the inn. They were taken of course into everybody's scrap-book, or everybody's memory.

Note on George the Third.— When the present King was quite a lad, there was a young fellow about the Prince's Court, who being thought natural son to my Uncle Robert, was petted and provided for in some manner by the family, and used to visit familiarly at my mother's; who said that he told her how one day the two eldest boys were playing in the Princess's apartment, when the second said suddenly, "Brother, when you and I are *men grown*, you shall marry a wife and I'll keep a mistress." "What you say there? you naughty boy," exclaimed the mother, "You better to learn your pronouns as preceptor bid you; I believe you not know what it is, — a pronoun."

"Be quiet, Eddy," says the King; "we shall have anger presently for your nonsense. Fletcher! (to my courtier cousin) give us the books." "Let them alone," cries Prince Edward; "I

know what it is without a book : a pronoun is to a noun what a mistress is to a wife, — a substitute and a representative." The Princess burst out o' laughing and turned them all out of the room.

Prince Edward was the Duke of York, who died at Monaco in Italy.

Mrs. Crewe and Mrs. Bouverie. — The two fashionable belles about the Court and town had been painted by Reynolds in character of two shepherdesses, with a pensive air as if appealing to each other, about the year 1770, or perhaps earlier ; and there was written under the picture : "Et in Arcadia ego." When the Exhibition was arranging, the members and their friends went and looked the works over. "What can this mean?" said Dr. Johnson ; "it seems very nonsensical, — *I am in Arcadia.*" "Well ! what of that ! The King could have told you," replied the painter. "*He* saw it yesterday, and said at once, 'O, there is a tombstone in the background. Ay, ay, death is even in Arcadia.'"

The thought is borrowed from Poussin ; where the gay frolickers stumble over a death's head, with a scroll proceeding from his mouth, saying, "Et in Arcadia *ego.*"

'T is said that those who seek *one* thing, often find a better which was not the primary object of their search. Queen Caroline looked for popular applause, and gained private esteem. In pursuit of her original desire to please every one who was presented, however, she made herself acquainted with the well-known events in English History ; and having been told that a Derbyshire baronet, Sir Woolston Dixie, lived near the spot where Richard the Third lost his life and crown, readily adverted to that occurrence, and when *his* name was mentioned, said, "O, Sir ! it has been related to me your connection with Bosworth Field and the *memorable battle* fought there." The gentleman's face, even redder than before, swelled with indignation, till at last he broke out with no very decorous vehemence of protestation, that all her Majesty had heard concerning it was false and groundless ; and that he would find a way to make those repent who had filled the ears of his Sovereign with such gross untruths. "God forgive my great sin !" cried the astonished Princess ; and Sir Woolston Dixie left the drawing-room in an agony scarce to be described.

The misintelligence, as the French call it, was occasioned by the baronet's utter ignorance of historic literature. He was a brutal fellow, and having assaulted a tinker some day crossing Bosworth Field, the tinker laid down his tools and beat him severely; which his merry neighbors heard with pleasure, and called this luckless encounter, naturally enough, *The Battle of Bosworth*; while poor Sir Woolston, having never heard of any other contest in the place, except his own, made no doubt but that the Queen had heard of his disgrace, and took that opportunity to ridicule him for it.

I must add, that such instances of gross ignorance in country gentlemen were not — as now — incompatible with birth, rank, or fortune; I mean in the days when Caroline of Anspach canvassed her drawing-room at St. James's.

Lady Archibald Hamilton formed during many years, the object of Frederick's avowed, and particular attachment.

She was mother to Archdeacon Hamilton, who lived his last years and died in the Circus here at Bath. He was very unhappy in his family; and when *one* observed accidentally on *another* friend's ill-fortune, — "Has he three children?" says poor Hamilton; "and are they like mine?"* His mother was the Delamira of the "Tatler." His daughter is the Countess of Aldborough.

"The inglorious naval engagement in the Mediterranean, between Byng and La Galissoniere, for his conduct in which the former of those admirals suffered." — *Wraxall*.

Note. — See "Retrospection," 2d Vol., page 423, near the bottom. I had more grace than to name my own father and uncle in a quarto volume meant for public view; but I may tell *you* thus privately, and after more than half a century has past, how my uncle (who was then judge of the Admiralty) felt affected, when the old Duke of Newcastle wrung him by the hand and said, "My dear Sir Thomas, England has seen her best days. We are all undone. This d—— fellow has done for us, and all is over."

* "What, have his daughters brought him to this pass?"

Lear.

"The Treasury, the Admiralty, the War Office, all obeyed his (the first Pitt's) orders with prompt and implicit submission. Lord Anson and the Duke of Newcastle, sometimes, it is true, remonstrated, and often complained; but always finished by compliance." — *Wraxall*.

Note. — Their compliance was submission of the most unqualified kind, and the patience with which they waited in the ante-room, while Mr. Pitt was examining some machinery brought for his inspection by Nuttal the engine-maker in Long Acre, was truly laughable.

"All circumstances fully weighed, my own conviction is, that the Letters of 'Junius' were written by the Right Honorable William Gerard Hamilton, commonly designated by the nickname of 'Single-Speech Hamilton.'" — *Wraxall*.

Note. — So it is *mine*. I well remember when they were most talked of — and N. Seward said, "How the arrows of Junius were sure to wound, and likely to stick." "Yes, Sir," replied Dr. Johnson; "yet let us distinguish between the venom of the shaft, and the vigor of the bow." At which expression Mr. Hamilton's countenance fell in a manner that to *me* betrayed the author. Johnson repeated the expression in his next pamphlet, — and Junius *wrote no more*.

Note. — Lord Thurlow was storming one day at his old valet, who thought little of a violence with which he had been long familiar, and "Go to the devil *do*," cries the enraged master; "Go, I say, to the devil." "Give me a character, my Lord," replied the fellow, drily; "people like, you know, to have characters from their acquaintance."

"The expression of his (the first Lord Liverpool's) countenance, I find it difficult to describe." — *Wraxall*.

Note. — It *was* very peculiar, but he was a delightful companion in social life. I know few people whose conversation was more pleasingly diversified with fact and sentiment, narration and reflection, than that of the first Lord Liverpool.

"'Charles Fox,' observed he (Mr. Boothby) 'is unquestionably a man of first-rate talents, but so deficient in judgment, as

never to have succeeded in any object during his whole life. He loved only three things; women, play, and politics. Yet, at no period did he ever form a creditable connection with a woman. He lost his whole fortune at the gaming-table; and with the exception of about eleven months, he has remained always in Opposition.' It is difficult to dispute the justice of this portrait." — *Wraxall*.

Note. — He preferred Mrs. (now Lady) Crewe, to all women living; but Lady Crewe never lost an atom of character, — I mean female honor. She loved high play and dissipation, but was no sensualist.

Note. — Lord Sandwich came very early into a very small paternal estate; and his first entrance into life was marked by an apparently warm disposition towards virtue. He was, however, avowedly poor and proud; said that Sir Robert Walpole possessed no powers of gaining him over from the opposition party, whilst he was contented to live with the woman of his heart in a small house somewhere about Westminster, and *walk* to the House arm-in-arm with one friend, for whose opinions he had the highest deference. Sir Robert laughed, and only said, "We shall see how all this ends."

The Countess, though forty-four years old when Lord Sandwich came of age and could not be persuaded to forbear pursuing her, brought him a son, which cost her future health, and with her health that flexibility of temper, which before marriage he deemed her possessed of. But,

"To win a man when all our pains succeed,
The way to keep him is a task indeed."

Virtue and sense were soon found insufficient, joined to a faded form and fretted mind, wherein resided sullen disapprobation of all that frolic playfulness to which her lord was naturally prone, and which his interested friend taught him to consider as innocent, even when combined with late hours, loose company, and sometimes higher play than he could afford; although Lord Sandwich never was a *rated* gamester like Fox, or Fitzpatrick, &c. Ill received at home, however, his pleasures drew him thence, and *they*, growing hourly more and more expensive, as his friend's amusements were all placed to his account.

The Minister felt happy to provide for both, and this young nobleman owed to his wife's stern virtue, and his companion's insidious indulgences, a character no man but Churchill could portray, — no man, I hope besides himself, deserve: —

“Is God's most holy name to be profaned?
His Word rejected, and his laws arraigned:
His servants scorned as men who idly dreamed,
His service laughed at; His dread Son blasphemed?
Is science by a scoundrel to be led?
Are States to totter on a drunkard's head?
Search earth, search hell, the Devil cannot find
An agent like Lothario to his mind.”

The *end* of such men (with regard to this life) is safer to imagine than describe. When talents, though they can't protect, reproach their mad possessors, and conscience, which congratulates the good man's exit, lighting his last steps with her hallowed taper: —

“Turns to a fury with a flaming torch,
Quickly extinguished in mephitic gloom!”

O, let us, to use a phrase of Shakespear, *sweeten our imaginations*; and forgetting such characters, rather recollect Dodridge's Epigram upon his own motto: —

“Dum vivimus, vivamus.”

“Live while you live, the epicure will say,
And give to pleasure ev'ry passing day;
Live while you live, the sacred preacher cries,
And give to God each moment as it flies:
Lord! in *my* views, let both united be!
I live to pleasure whilst I live to Thee.”

Now as a note to the third or fourth line of Churchill's verses, accept the following *true* anecdote: —

Lord Sandwich had trained up a huge baboon that he was fond of, to play the part of a clergyman, dressed in canonicals, and make some buffoon imitation of saying grace. Among many merry friends round the table, sat a Mr. Scott, afterwards well known by name of Antisejanus; but then a mere dependent servitor at college, and humble playfellow of young Hinchinbroke. The ape had no sooner finished his grimaces, and taken leave of the company, than Scott unexpectedly, but unabashed, stood up and said: —

"I protest, my lord, I intended doing this duty myself, not knowing till now that your lordship had so *near a relation in orders*." *

I must add that Lord Sandwich praised his wit and courage without ever resenting the liberty.

He had founded a society, denominated from his own name, "The Franciscans," who, to the number of twelve, met at Medmenham Abbey, near Marlow, in Bucks, on the banks of the Thames.

The best account of these horrors, and the least offensive, is in "Chrysal; or, the Adventures of a Guinea," written by Smollet.

"Beauchlerc discovered him (Fox) intently engaged in reading a Greek Herodotus. 'What would you have me do,' said he, 'I have lost my last shilling!' Such was the elasticity, suavity, and equality of disposition that characterized him; and with so little effort did he pass from profligate dissipation to researches of taste or literature." — *Wraxall*.

Note. — I have heard this story before, and believe it is true. Topham Beauchlerc (wicked and profligate as he wished to be accounted) was yet a man of very strict veracity. O Lord! how I did hate that horrid Beauchlerc!

"If Burke really believed the facts that he laid down (regarding the American war), what are we to think of his judgment!" — *Wraxall*.

Note. — Burke troubled himself but little to think on what he had said; he spoke for present and immediate effect, rarely if ever missing his aim; because, like Doctor Johnson, he always *spoke his best*, whether on great or small occasions. One evening at Sir Joshua Reynolds's it was his humor to harangue in praise of the then ceded islands, and in their praise he said so much, that Mrs. Horneck, a widow with two beautiful daughters, resolved to lose no time in purchasing where such advantages would infallibly arise. She did so, and lost a large portion of

* At a supper of the Hell-fire Club, a chair was left vacant at the head of the table for the Devil. In the height of the revelry, the ape unexpectedly took his seat upon it, and the company, conceiving the Spirit of Evil to be among them, broke up in most admired confusion.

her slender income. "Dear Sir," said I, when we met next, "how fatal has your eloquence proved to poor Mrs. Horneck!" "How fatal her own folly!" replied he; "Ods my life, must one swear to the truth of a song."

To Wraxall's remark that Burke's Irish accent was as strong as if he had never quitted the banks of the Shannon, she adds, "very true." The description of him as "gentle, mild, and amenable to argument in private society," is qualified by, "not very;" and in the sentence, "infinitely more respectable than Fox, he was nevertheless far less amiable," she proposes to replace "amiable" by "respected."

"It is difficult to do justice to the peculiar species of ugliness which characterized his (Dunning) person and figure, although he did not labor under any absolute deformity of shape or limb."—*Wraxall*.

Note.—Sir Joshua alone could give a good portrait of Dunning. His picture of Lord Shelburne, Lord Ashburton, and Colonel Barré, has surely no superior. The characters so admirable, the likenesses so strong."

Of the first Lord Loughborough she writes:—

Wedderburn was particularly happy when speaking of Franklyn, who (he said) the Ministers had wantonly and foolishly made their enemy. An enemy so inveterate, said he, so merciless, and so implacable, that he resembles Zanga the Moor, in Young's tragedy of the "Revenge," who at length ends his hellish plot by saying:—

"I forged the letter, and disposed the picture,
I hated, I despised, and I destroy."

The quotation struck every one.*

Benjamin Franklyn, who, by bringing a spark from Heaven, fulfilled the prophecies he pretended to disbelieve; Franklyn, who wrote a profane addition to the Book of Genesis, who hissed on the colonies against their parent country, who taught men to despise their Sovereign and insult their Redeemer; who did all the mischief in his power while living, and at last died, I think, in America; was beside all the rest, a plagiarist, as it appears; and

* Franklin never forgave this speech, and by making it Wedderburne aggravated the very mischief he was deprecating.

the curious epitaph made *on* himself, and as we long believed, *by* himself, was, I am informed, borrowed without acknowledgment, from one, upon Jacob Tonson, to whom it was more appropriate, comparing himself to an old book, eaten by worms ; which on some future day, however, should be new *edited*, after undergoing *revisal* and *correction* by the *Author*.

There are some exquisitely pretty stanzas, very little known, written by one Mr. Dale, upon Franklyn's invention of a lamp, in which the flame was forced downward, burning in a new discovered method, contrary to nature. I had a rough copy of the verses, and they lay loose in the second volume of "*Retrospection*," but I suppose they dropped out, and I lost them, or they should have been written down here.

I cannot trust my memory to do them justice. The first stanzas praise his philosophical powers : —

" But to covet political fame,
Was in him a degrading ambition ;
'T was a *spark* that from Lucifer came,
And first kindled the blaze of sedition.

" May not Candor then write on his urn,
Here alas ! lies a noted inventor ;
Whose flame up to Heaven ought to burn,
But *inverted*, descends to the centre." *

" Like his nephew, Mr. Fox, the Duke (of Richmond) did not spare the King, when addressing the House of Lords ; and he was considered as peculiarly obnoxious at St. James's." — *Wraxall*.

Note. — He never forgave the preference given by the King's *immediate advisers*, when there was question of a Consort to the English Throne, where he hoped to see his beautiful sister (Lady Sarah) seated — in vain ! Lord Bute was too quick in providing a much safer partner.

* It is strange that she forgot to mention Turgot's famous motto for the bust of Franklin, by Houdon : —

" Eripuit cœlo fulmen, sceptrumque tyrannis."

Franklin's own criticism on it was that the thunder remained where he found it, and that more than a million of men co-operated with him in shaking off the monarchical rule of Great Britain.

"Burke exclaimed, that 'he (Pitt) was not merely a chip of the old block, but the old block itself.' " — *Wraxall*.

Note. — Not quite. The *old* block's *head* was beautiful, and the eyes in it brilliant with intelligence.

Note. — I have seen Sheridan (the father of R. B.) on the stage in former days, acting Horatio in Rowe's "Fair Penitent," to Garrick's Lothario; but of his powers as a lecturer, Mr. Murphy gave the most ludicrous account, taking him off with incomparable powers of mimicry, — quite unequalled.

Note. — He (Lord Mulgrave) was a haughty, spirited man, whom I should not suspect of any possible meanness, for any possible advantage. Rough as a boatswain, proud as a strong feeling of aristocracy could make him, and fond of coarse merriment, approaching to ill-manners, he was in society a dangerous converser: one never knew what he would say next. "Why, Holla, Burke! (I heard him crying out on one occasion.) What, you are rioting in puns now Johnson is away." Burke was indignant, and ready with a reply. But Lord Mulgrave drowned all in storms of laughter.

In reference to the "Optat Ehippia Bos piger" story of Lord Falmouth and Pitt, told by *Wraxall*, she writes: —

I have heard my father relate the story somewhat differently, but in substance the same. *He* said some wag chalked the words on his (Lord Falmouth's) door, and that seeing them he exclaimed, "He would give £100 to know who wrote them." The first friend he met said, "Give *me* the money, Horace wrote them." Then comes the next mistake, "Horace! a dog, after all his obligations to me," &c.*

A similar story to this was related to me in Italy. Cardinal Zanelli was pasquinaded at Rome for his ingratitude to the Dauphin of France, whose influence, exerted in his favor, had procured him the dignity of Eminenza. Zanelli's coat armor was a *vine*; the statue exhibited these words: —

"Plantavi *Vineam*, et fecit labruscas."

The enraged Cardinal, little skilled in Scripture learning

* *i. e.* Horace Walpole. Lord Falmouth's family name was Boscawen, and he had just been soliciting the Garter.

actually promised a reward to whoever would tell who wrote it. Next day Pasquin claimed the reward for himself, having marked under the words, *40th chapter of Isaiah*.

Note.—In this memorable year, 1782, the “Atlas” man-of-war was launched, a three-decker of eminent beauty. We all know that the figure at the ship’s head corresponds with the name, and I was informed that Hercules’s substitute was a most magnificent fellow, fit to support the globe. When, however, they came to ship her bowsprit, he stood so high, that something was found necessary to be done; and the rough carpenter, waiting no orders, cut part of the globe away which stood upon the hero’s shoulders. When it was examined afterwards, the part lost to our possession was observed to be *America*. Sailors remarked the accident as ominous, and the event has not tended to lessen their credulity.

When Montcalm was dying of his wounds in the great battle which deprived us of General Wolfe, “Well, well!” said he, “England has torn North America from *us*, but she will one day tear herself from the mother country. Once free from the *French yoke*, she will endure *no other*.”

My father said those were his very words: my father died in the year 1762, but he always predicted American Independence.

“During his elder brother’s life, when only Lord Harry Powlett, he (the Duke of Bolton) had served in the royal navy, where, however, he acquired no laurels, and he was commonly supposed to be the ‘Captain Whiffle’ portrayed by Smollet, in his ‘Roderick Random.’” — *Wraxall*.

Note.—I don’t know whether this Lord Harry Powlett, or an uncle of his wearing the same name, was the person of whom my mother used to relate a ludicrous anecdote. Some lady with whom *she* had been well acquainted, and to whom his lordship was observed to pay uncommon attentions, requested him to procure for her a pair of small monkeys from East India, — I forget the kind. Lord Harry, happy to oblige her, wrote immediately, depending on the best services of a distant friend, whom he had essentially served. Writing a bad hand, however, and spelling

what he wrote for with more haste than correctness, he charged the gentleman to send him over *two* monkeys, but the word being written *too*, and all the characters of one height, 100, -- what was poor Lord Harry Powlett's dismay, when a letter came to hand, with the news that he would receive fifty monkeys by such a ship, and fifty more by the next conveyance, making up the *hundred* according to his lordship's commands !

Note. — They said Pitt and Legge went together like Cæsar and Bibulus, — and so they did ; all the attention paid the *first*, and none to the *last*-named consul.

Note. — The following epigram was handed about to ridicule Sir Thomas Rumbold : —

“ When Mackreith lived 'mong Arthur's crew,
He cried, Here, Rumbold, black my shoe ;
And Rumbold answered, Yea, Bob.
But when returned from Asia's land,
He proudly scorned that mean command,
And boldly answered, Nay, Bob (*Nabob*).”

Note. — On this occasion (victory over De Grasse in 1782) Rodney is said to have taught them the method of breaking the line, by which I have heard it asserted that Lord Nelson won all his victories by sea, and Buonaparte by land ; but which is a still stranger thing, Lord Glenbervie told me (and I believe him) that Epaminondas won the battles of Leuctra and Mantinea by the same manoeuvre 2,178 years ago.

“ The Princess of Franca Villa was commonly supposed to have bestowed on him (Lord Rockingham) the same fatal present, which the ‘ Belle Ferroniere ’ conferred on Francis the First, King of France ; and which, as we learn from Burnet,* the Countess of Southesk was said to have entailed on James, Duke of York, afterwards James the Second.” — *Wraxall*.

In Italy it was supposed to have been the succession powder mingled with chocolate whilst in the cake, not in the liquid we drink. Acqua Toffana, and succession powder (polvere per successione) were administered, as I have heard, with certain although ill-understood effects. Lord Rockingham desired to be opened after his death, and was so.

* The story is told in Grammont's Memoirs.

On the application of the term "disinterested" to Archbishop Moore's conduct, in communicating to his pupil, the Duke of Marlborough, the advances of the Duchess Dowager, her note is : —

Disinterested is not quite the word to use. He served his interest in preferring the *Duke's* power to a connection with the *Duchess*, who had only her life income to bestow, and a faded person possessing no attractions.

"There were a number of Members who regularly received from him (Pelham's Secretary of the Treasury) their payment or stipend at the end of every session in bank-notes." — *Wraxall*.

Note. — I am sorry to read these things of Mr. Pelham, whom everybody loved, and Garrick praised so sweetly, saying : —

"Let others hail the rising sun,
I bow to that whose course is run,
Which sets in endless night;
Whose rays benignant blessed our Isle,
Made peaceful nature round us smile,
With calm but cheerful light.

"See as you pass the crowded street,
Despondence clouds each face you meet,
All their lost friend deplore.
You read in every pensive eye,
You hear in every broken sigh,
That Pelham is no more."

This Ode, from whence I have selected two stanzas, not the best, and a comical thing called "The News Writers' Petition," that came out a very little while before, give one the impression of his having been a very honest man. I am quite sorry *Wraxall's* book tends so much to destroy that impression.

Pelham's death was curious, and he thought so; for it was his favorite maxim in politics, never to stir an evil which lies quiet, "And now," said he, upon his deathbed to his doctor, "I die for having acted in contradiction to my own good rule, — taking unnecessary medicines for a stone which lay still enough in my bladder, and might perhaps never have given me serious injury." But so it is, that though death certainly does *strike* the dart, it is often vice or folly poisons it, — with regard to this world or the world to come.

MISCELLANIES

OR

ORIGINAL COMPOSITIONS IN PROSE AND VERSE.



MISCELLANIES

OR

ORIGINAL COMPOSITIONS IN PROSE AND VERSE.*

THE THREE WARNINGS.

A TALE.

THE tree of deepest root is found
Least willing still to quit the ground ;
'T was therefore said by ancient sages,
That love of life increased with years,
So much, that in our latter stages,
When pains grow sharp and sickness rages,
The greatest love of life appears.
This greatest affection to believe,
Which all confess, but few perceive,
If old affections can't prevail,
Be pleased to hear a modern tale.
When sports went round, and all were gay,
On neighbor Dobson's wedding-day,
Death called aside the jocund groom,
With him into another room ;
And looking grave, you must, says he,
Quit your sweet bride, and come with me.
With you, and quit my Susan's side ?
With you ! the hapless husband cried :
Young as I am ; 't is monstrous hard ;
Besides, in truth, I 'm not prepared :
My thoughts on other matters go,
This is my wedding night, you know.
What more he urged I have not heard,
His reasons could not well be stronger,
So Death the poor delinquent spared,

* Under this head I have printed only those which were found detached. The majority of her fugitive pieces and occasional verses are contained in the Letters.

And left to live a little longer.
Yet calling up a serious look,
His hour-glass trembled while he spoke,
Neighbor, he said, farewell. No more
Shall Death disturb your mirthful hour,
And further, to avoid all blame
Of cruelty upon my name,
To give you time for preparation,
And fit you for your future station,
Three several warnings you shall have
Before you 're summoned to the grave :
Willing, for once, I 'll quit my prey,
And grant a kind reprieve ;
In hopes you 'll have no more to say
But when I call again this way,
Well pleased the world will leave.
To these conditions both consented,
And parted perfectly contented.
What next the hero of our tale befell,
How long he lived, how wise, how well,
How roundly he pursued his course,
And smoked his pipe, and stroked his horse,
The willing muse shall tell :
He chaffered then, he bought, he sold,
Nor once perceived his growing old,
Nor thought of Death as near ;
His friends not false, his wife no shrew,
Many his gains, his children few,
He passed his hours in peace ;
But while he viewed his wealth increase,
While thus along life's dusty road
The beaten track content he trod,
Old time whose haste no mortal spares
Uncalled, unheeded, unawares,
Brought him on his eightieth year.
And now one night in musing mood,
As all alone he sate,
Th' unwelcome messenger of fate
Once more before him stood.
Half stilled with anger and surprise,
So soon returned ! old Dobson cries.
So soon, d' ye call it ! Death replies :
Surely, my friend, you 're but in jest ;

Since I was here before
'T is six-and-thirty years at least,
And you are now fourscore.
So much the worse, the clown rejoined,
To spare the aged would be kind ;
However, see your search be legal
And your authority, — Is 't regal ?
Else you are come on a fool's errand,
With but a secretary's warrant.
Besides, you promised me three warnings,
Which I have looked for nights and mornings ;
But for that loss of time and ease
I can recover damages.
I know, cries Death, that at the best,
I seldom am a welcome guest ;
But don't be captious, friend, at least ;
I little thought you 'd still be able
To stump about your farm and stable ;
Your years have run to a great length,
I wish you joy though of your strength.
Hold, says the farmer, not so fast,
I have been lame these four years past.
And no great wonder, Death replies ;
However, you still keep your eyes,
And sure to see one's loves and friends,
For legs and arms would make amends.
Perhaps, says Dobson, so it might,
But, latterly, I 've lost my sight.
This is a shocking story, faith,
Yet there 's some comfort still, says Death ;
Each strives your sadness to amuse,
I warrant you have all the news.
There 's none, cries he, and if there were,
I 'm grown so deaf, I could not hear.
Nay then, the spectre stern rejoined,
These are unjustifiable yearnings ;
If you are lame and deaf and blind,
You 've had your three sufficient warnings.
So come along, no more we 'll part :
He said, and touched him with his dart ;
And now old Dobson, turning pale,
Yields to his fate, — so ends my tale.

DUTY AND PLEASURE.

DUTY and Pleasure — long at strife,
Crossed in the common walks of life ;
Pray, don't disturb me, get you gone,
Cries Duty in a serious tone :
Then with a smile, — keep off, my dear,
Nor force me thus to be severe.
Lord, Sir, she cries, you 're grown so grave
You make yourself a perfect slave ;
I can't think why we disagree,
You may turn Methodist for me.
But if you 'll neither laugh nor play,
At least don't stop me on my way ;
Yet sure one moment you might steal
To see our lovely Miss O'Neill ;
One hour to relaxation give,
O, lend one hour from life — to live.
And here 's a bird and there 's a flower,
Dear Duty, walk a little slower.
My youthful task is not half done,
Cries Duty, with an inward groan ;
False colors on each object spread,
I scarce see whence or where I 'm led ;
Your bragged enjoyments mount the wind,
And leave their venom'd stings behind.
Where are you flown ? Voices around
Cry — Pleasure long has left this ground :
Old age advances — haste away ;
Nor lose the light of parting day.
See sickness follows, sorrow threats :
Waste no more time in vain regrets.
One moment more to Duty given,
Might reach perhaps the gates of heaven,
Where only — each with each delighted —
Duty and Pleasure live united.

THE STREATHAM PORTRAITS.

MADAME D'ARBLAY'S description of the Streatham Portraits will be the best preface to the following verses on them: "Mrs. Thrale and her eldest daughter were in one piece, over the fireplace (of the library), at full length. The rest of the pictures were all three-quarters. Mr. Thrale was over the door leading to his study. The general collection then began by Lord Sandys and Lord Westcote (Lyttelton), two early noble friends of Mr. Thrale. Then followed Dr. Johnson, Mr. Burke, Dr. Goldsmith, Mr. Murphy, Mr. Garrick, Mr. Baretti, Sir. Robert Chambers, and Sir Joshua Reynolds himself, — all painted in the highest style of this great master, who much delighted in this his Streatham gallery. There was place left but for one more frame when the acquaintance with Dr. Burney began at Streatham."

The whole of them were sold by auction in the spring of 1816. According to Mrs. Piozzi's marked catalogue, they fetched respectively the following prices, which appear to vary according to the celebrity of the subjects, and to make small account of the pictures considered as works of art: "Lord Sandys, £ 36 15s. (Lady Downshire); Lord Lyttelton, £ 43 1s. (Mr. Lyttelton, his son); Mrs. Piozzi and her daughter, £ 81 18s. (S. Boddington, Esq., a rich merchant); Goldsmith (duplicate of the original), £ 133 7s. (Duke of Bedford); Sir J. Reynolds, £ 128 2s. (R. Sharp, Esq., M.P.); Sir R. Chambers, £ 84 (Lady Chambers, his widow); David Garrick, £ 183 15s. (Dr. Charles Burney); Baretti, £ 31 10s. (Stewart, Esq., I know not who); Dr. Burney, £ 84 (Dr. C. Burney, his son); Edmund Burke, £ 252 (R. Sharp, Esq., M.P.); Dr. Johnson, £ 378 (Watson Taylor, Esq.), by whom for Mr. Murphy was offered £ 102 18s., but I bought it in." In 1780 Reynolds raised the price of his portraits (three-quarter size) from thirty-five to fifty guineas, which, Mrs. Piozzi complains, made the Streatham portraits in many instances cost more than they fetched, as she had to pay for them after Mr.

Thrale's death at the increased price. Her own prefatory remarks are:—

“ With the dismal years 1772 and 1773 ended much of my misery, no doubt. The recollection of the sweet and saint-like manner in which my incomparable mother meekly laid down her temporal existence, sweetened the loss of her who I shall see no more in this world, and whose situation in the next will probably be too high for my most fervent aspirations. The loss of our dear boy fell so heavy on my husband, that it became my duty to endure it courageously, and shake away as much of the weight as it was possible. Among other efforts to amuse myself and my eldest daughter, — now my daily companion, and a *charming* one, but never partial to a mother who sought in vain to obtain her friendship, — was a fancy I took of writing little paltry verse characters of the gentlemen who sat for their portraits in the library, and of whose sittings I was cruelly impatient. No wonder! when such calamity was hanging over our heads as is mentioned in the last volume. Let that reflection make you hesitate in censuring the satirical vein which perhaps does run through them all: —

I.

LORD SANDYS appears first, at the head of the tribe,
But flat insipidity who can describe?
When such parents and wife as might check even Pindar,
Form family compacts his progress to hinder:
Their oppression for forty long years he endured,
The nobleman sunk, and the scholar obscured;
Till rank, reason, virtue, endeav'ring in vain
To fling off their burden, and break off their chain,
Can at last but regret, not resist, his hard fate,
Like Enceladus, crushed by the mountainous weight.

II.

Next him on the right hand, see Lyttelton hang;
Polite in behavior, prolix in harangue.
With power well matured, with science well bred,
He had studied, had travelled, had reasoned, had read.
Yet the mind, as the body, was wanting in strength,
For in Lyttelton everything run into length;

Of his long wheaten straw *that* the farmer complains,
Where the chaff is still found to outnumber the grains.

III.

In these features * so placid, so cool, so serene,
What trace of the wit or the Welshwoman's seen ?
What trace of the tender, the rough, the refined,
The soul in which such contrarieties joined !
Where, though merriment loves over method to rule,
Religion resides, and the virtues keep school :
Till when tired we condemn her dogmatical air,
Like a rocket she rises, and leaves us to stare.
To such contradictions d'ye wish for a clue ?
Keep vanity still, that vile passion, in view,
For 't is thus the slow miner his fortune to make,
Of arsenic thin scattered pursues the pale track,
Secure where that poison pollutes the rich ground,
That it points to the place where some silver is found.

IV.

Of a virgin so tender,† the face or the fame
Alike would be injured by praise or by blame ;
To the world's fiery trial too early consigned,
She soon shall experience it, cruel or kind.
His concern thus the artful enameller hides,
And his well-finished work to the furnace confides ;
But jocund resumes it secure from decay,
If the colors stand firm on the dangerous day.

* She complained in prose as well as in verse of the want of likeness in her own portrait. Northcote, in his *Life of Reynolds*, observed of Sir Joshua's pictures in general, that "they possess a degree of merit superior to mere portraits; they assume the rank of history. His portraits of men are distinguished by a certain air of dignity, and those of women and children by a grace, a beauty, and simplicity which have seldom been equalled and never surpassed. In his attempts to give character where it did not exist, he has sometimes lost likeness, but the deficiencies of the portrait were often compensated by the beauty of the picture." Mrs. Piozzi remarks on this passage: "True, in *my* portrait above all, there is really no resemblance, and the *character* is less like *my* father's daughter than Pharaoh's." Speaking of Sir Joshua's picture of Lady Sarah Bunbury "sacrificing to the Graces," Mrs. Piozzi says: "Lady Sarah never did sacrifice to the Graces. Her beauty was in her face, which had few equals; but she was a cricket player, and ate beefsteaks upon the Steyne at Brighthelmstone."

† Her eldest daughter, then a child.

V.

A manner so studied, so vacant a face,
 These features the mind of our Murphy disgrace,
 A mind unaffected, soft, artless, and true,
 A mind which, though ductile, has dignity too.
 Where virtues ill-sorted are huddled in heaps,
 Humanity triumphs, and piety sleeps;
 A mind in which mirth may with merit reside,
 And Learning turns Frolic, with Humor, his guide.
 Whilst wit, follies, faults, its fertility prove,
 Till the faults you grow fond of, the follies you love,
 And corrupted at length by the sweet conversation,
 You swear there 's no honesty left in the nation.
 An African landscape thus breaks on the sight,
 Where confusion and wildness increase the delight;
 Till in wanton luxuriance indulging our eye,
 We faint in the forcible fragrance, and die.

VI.

From our Goldsmith's anomalous character, who
 Can withhold his contempt, and his reverence too?
 From a poet so polished, so paltry a fellow!
 From critic, historian, or vile Punchinello!
 From a heart in which meanness had made her abode,
 From a foot that each path of vulgarity trod;
 From a head to invent, and a hand to adorn,
 Unskilled in the schools, a philosopher born.
 By disguise undefended, by jealousy smit,
 This *lusus naturæ*, nondescript in wit,
 May best be compared to those Anamorphoses,
 Which for lectures to ladies th' optician proposes;
 All deformity seeming, in some points of view,
 In others quite accurate, regular, true:
 Till the student no more sees the figure that shocked her,
 But all in his likeness, — our odd little doctor.

VII.

Of Reynolds all good should be said, and no harm;
 Though the heart is too frigid, the pencil too warm;
 Yet each fault from his converse we still must disclaim,
 As his temper 't is peaceful, and pure as his fame.

Nothing in it o'erflows, nothing ever is wanting,
 It nor chills like his kindness, nor glows like his painting.
 When Johnson by strength overpowers our mind,
 When Montagu dazzles, and Burke strikes us blind;
 To Reynolds well pleased for relief we must run,
 Rejoice in his shadow, and shrink from the sun.

VIII.

In this luminous portrait, requiring no shade,
 See Chambers' soft character sweetly displayed;
 O, quickly return with that genuine smile,
 Nor longer let India's temptations beguile,
 But fly from a climate where moist relaxation
 Invades with her torpor th' effeminate nation,
 Where metals and marbles will melt and decay,
 Fear, man, for thy virtue, — and hasten away.

IX.

Here Garrick's loved features our mem'ry may trace,
 Here praise is exhausted, and blame has no place.
 Many portraits like this would defeat my whole scheme,
 For what new can be said on so hackneyed a theme?
 'T is thus on old Ocean whole days one may look,
 Every change well recorded in some well-known book;
 Till with vain expectation fatiguing our eyes,
 Nor the storm nor the calm one new image supplies.

X.

See Thrale from intruders defending his *door*,
 While he wishes his house would with people run o'er;
 Unlike his companions, the make of his mind,
 In great things expanded, in small things confined.
 Yet his purse at their call and his meat to their taste,
 The wits he delighted in loved him at last;
 And finding no prominent follies to flee at,
 Respected his wealth and applauded his merit:
 Much like that empirical chemist was he
 Who thought *Anima Mundi* the grand panacea.
 Yet when every kind element helped his collection,
 Fell sick while the med'cine was yet in projection.

XI.

Baretti hangs next, by his frowns you may know him,
He has lately been reading some new-published poem;
He finds the poor author a blockhead, a beast,
A fool without sentiment, judgment, or taste.
Ever thus let our critic his insolence fling,
Like the hornet in Homer, impatient to sting.
Let him rally his friends for their frailties before 'em,
And scorn the dull praise of that dull thing, decorum:
While tenderness, temper, and truth he despises,
And only the triumph of victory prizes.
Yet let us be candid, and where shall we find
So active, so able, so ardent a mind?
To your children more soft, more polite with your servant,
More firm in distress, or in friendship more fervent.
Thus *Ætna* enraged her artillery pours,
And tumbles down palaces, princes, and towers;
While the fortunate peasantry fixed at its foot,
Can make it a hot-house to ripen their fruit.

XII.

See next, happy contrast! in Burney combine
Every power to please, every talent to shine.
In professional science a second to none,
In social if second, through shyness alone.
So sits the sweet violet close to the ground,
Whilst holy-oaks and sunflowers flaunt it around.
His character formed free, confiding, and kind,
Grown cautious by habit, by station confined:
Though born to improve and enlighten our days,
In a supple facility fixes his praise;
And contented to soothe, unambitious to strike,
Has a faint praise from all men, from all men alike.
While thus the rich wines of *Frontinac* impart
Their sweets to our palate, their warmth to our heart,
All in praise of a liquor so luscious agree,
From the monarch of France to the wild Cherokee.

XIII.

See Burke's bright intelligence beams from his face,
To his language gives splendor, his action gives grace;

Let us list to the learning that tongue can display,
 Let it steal all reflection, all reason away,
 Lest home to his house we the patriot pursue,
 Where scenes of another sort rise to our view ;
 Where Av'rice usurps sage Economy's look,*
 And Humor cracks jokes out of Ribaldry's book :
 Till no longer in silence confession can lurk,
 That from chaos and cobwebs could spring even Burke.
 Thus, 'mong dirty companions, concealed in the ground,
 And unnoticed by all, the proud metal was found,
 Which, exalted by place and by polish refined,
 Could comfort, corrupt, and confound all mankind.

XIV.

Gigantic in knowledge, in virtue, in strength,
 With Johnson our company closes at length :
 So the Greeks from the cavern of Polypheme past,
 When, wisest and greatest, Ulysses came last,
 To his comrades contemptuous, we see him look down
 On their wit and their worth with a general frown :
 While from Science' proud tree the rich fruit *he* receives,
 Who could shake the whole trunk while they turned a few leaves.
 The inflammable temper, the positive tongue,
 Too conscious of right for endurance of wrong,
 We suffer from Johnson, contented to find
 That some notice we gain from so noble a mind ;
 And pardon our hurts, since so many have found
 The balm of instruction poured into the wound.
 'Tis thus for its virtues the chymists extol
 Pure rectified spirit, sublime alcohol :
 From noxious putrescence preservative pure,
 A cordial in health, and in sickness a cure ;
 But opposed to the sun, taking fire at his rays,
 Burns bright to the bottom, and ends in a blaze.

* Till he got his pension, Burke was always poor; and the wonder is how he managed to make both ends meet at all.

ASHERI.

אשרי

ARABIAN tales, all Oriental tales indeed, are full of imagination, void of common sense. The lady who recounts can scarcely fail to amuse. She is herself so handsome and so charming, the story must please, be it what it will; but they must be listeners like Sir James Fellowes who can feel interest in an old man's narration, and hear attentively the Rabbinical story concerning *A Search after Asheri*.

Four young men, then, stood round their father's death-bed. "I cannot speak what I wish you to hear," whispered the dying parent; "but there is a Genius residing in the neighboring wood, who pretends to direct mortals to *Asheri*. Meanwhile, accept my house and lands; they are not large, but will afford an elegant sufficiency. — Farewell."

Three of the brothers set out instantly for the wood. The fourth staid at home; and, having performed the last filial duties to a father he revered, began to cultivate his farm, and court his neighbor's daughter to share it with him. She was virtuous, kind, and amiable. We will leave them, and follow the adventurers, who soon arrived at the obscure habitation of the reputed sage, bosomed in trees, and his hut darkened with ivy. Scarce could the ambiguous mandates be heard; still less could the speaker (Imagination) be discerned through the gloom. "What is this *Asheri* we are to look out for?" said one brother. "O, when once seen, no eye can be mistaken," replied a voice from within the grove. "Three beautiful forms uniting under one radiant head, compose the sighed-for object." "I am a passionate admirer of *beauty*," interrupted the youth. "Shall I not find the lovely creature at Grand Cairo?" "Seek your desire there," was the reply; "the soil will be congenial to your nature." He set off without studying for an answer.

When the next brother made application : " I wonder," said he, " how this renowned *Asheri* should ever be found without obtaining court-favor, and permission to proceed in the search." " At Ispahan, Sir, you may procure both. Here are letters for the young Sophy of Persia, scarce thirteen years old, and her mother the Sultana Valadi." A respectful bow constituted this youth's adieu, and he put himself immediately on progress.

The third, who till now had been employed in laughing at and mimicking his companions, remained a moment with the Genius of the wood ; and " Well, Sir," said he, " which way shall *I* take towards finding this fabulous being, this faultless wonder, this non-existent chimera, *Asheri* ?" " O, you are a wit : make your *début* at Delhi ; 't is the only mart for talents." Aboul, willing to try his fortune, soon set out ; and after fifteen years — for so long my tale lasts — he was observed by two mendicants of ragged and wretched appearance ; who, fainting with hunger, and exhausted by disease, addressed him as he sat upon a stone by the wayside leading to Kouristan, 400 miles from Delhi. " I have no money, my honest friends," said he ; " but you shall share my dinner of brown bread and goat's milk. You have scarcely strength, I see, to reach the cottage : I will run home and fetch two wooden bowls full." He did so, and they were refreshed, and recognized each other. It was now who should tell his hapless history ; but Aboul was ablest and gave the following account :—

" You left me," said he, " with that rascally conjuror, Imagination by name, whose delight it is to dress up a phantom for poor afflicted mortals to follow, and he calls it *Asheri*. My destiny led me to seek in Delhi the bright reward of superior talents ; but it was never my intention to claim applause till I had deserved it ; so my lamp went not out at night till I had composed a book of tales for publication, — short ones, but well-varied, for novels were the mode at Delhi. In a week's time the book was in every hand that could hold one. The reviews criticised, but the ladies bought it, and the criticisms did me more good than harm. An ill-spent note called me to the toilette of a great lady ; invitations then crowded round me, suppers without end, and dinners undesired. At first this was not unpleasant, and I began to

think Asheri not far distant. I wrote elaborate poems in praise of my protectress, entered into none of her intrigues; but against all the people she hated there were store of lampoons and choice of epigrams ready, composed by the fashionable author, your hapless brother Aboul. Favored by one society, therefore, persecuted by another; adored by one set of ignorant females, tormented by another set; stared at by a neutral class as if I had been a monster; everything I said repeated, and *wrong* repeated; everything I did related, and *wrong* related; I gained information that my patroness was on the eve of losing her friend the vizier's confidence, which a younger beauty (a woman she despised) was stealing away. My business was to satirize the vizier, who could not read; but soon understanding from others that it was done with acrimony of which Aboul only was capable, my Fatima was threatened; and to save *herself*, promised to give me up; but, in the clothes I exchanged instantly for those of a grateful slave, my escape was perfected, and you will not suspect me of seeking this invisible *Asheri* in the mean character of a village pedagogue,—for such you find me, after fifteen years' separation,—though, really, explaining to babies the rudiments of literature is at least a far less offensive employment than that of trying to instruct self-sufficient fools who take up their teachers out of vanity and discard them out of pride. I have been long enough a wit and an author. Now tell me *your* adventures."

"*Mine*," said the passionate admirer of beauty, "are soon told. I dashed at Cairo into the full tide of what the world calls *pleasure*, till dissipation was no more a name. Five of the fifteen years were spent in ruining myself and others. The ten remaining proved too few for my repentance, too many for my endurance. My frame exhausted, my very mind enfeebled, life is to me only a lengthening calamity. What was *your* course, Mesrou?"

"My *course* was wretched," replied Mesrou; "but my aim was well taken, and the goal I aimed at *grand*. Resolving to subdue all meaner passions, and dedicate myself to ambitious pursuits, I entered Ispahan with hope swelling in my heart, and presented my credentials to Sultana Valadi. She was old and ugly, amorous and vindictive. No matter; she guided the helm of state for her young son, whose honor she conceived would still

be best secured by keeping his subjects continually at war. I was a coadjutor completely to her taste in public and private, having small care for the nation, and few scruples of delicacy. We spared no expenses for the support of the army, but our generals were sometimes beaten and disgraced us ; sometimes victorious, and then they came home to insult us. My sultana's temper, crooked as her person, grew wholly insupportable ; every misfortune was set down to my account as minister, and money became hard to find. Taxes offended the people, and the soldiers refused to enforce them. The lady was affrighted at the spirit she had raised ; and, when I observed her one evening as if mixing some powders in the Cherbette we were to drink after supper, I was affrighted too ; and, grasping her so roughly that resistance was vain, I held the prepared potion to her own lips. Fortunately for my innocence, the Valadi, in her ungovernable fury at such treatment, broke a blood-vessel, and I left her to expire unpitied on the sofa, while the bustle gave me time to drop my turban ; and, snatching the lay frock from off a dervise in the crowd, covered myself up, and escaped from being the prime minister at Ispahan. Let us now try to find our fourth brother, Ittai, and return, though ragged, to our father's house."

The first man they met showed the leading path, and pointed out the way. Arrived, they saw the fields so much improved it was scarce possible to recognize the place. The man of talents, however, climbing a ladder which was reared against the wall for some reason, looked in, and perceived Ittai dancing at the celebration of his son's birthday. "O brother!" he exclaimed, "here we are ; we have never found Asheri." "That is a truth, indeed," replied a little figure from behind the screen, "for I have never moved for fifteen years from this very spot." "Is that the *beautiful* creature we were taught to expect?" cried out the man of pleasure. Ittai set wide his door, and a burst of brilliancy illuminated the dwelling. Virtue, Love, and Friendship — three forms under one radiant head — dazzled their sight ; and, "Keep your distance," said the well-tuned voice ; "Asheri abhors men who deny the existence of what all must wish, but none will ever find in pleasure, fame, or power. *Asheri* dwells in heaven, visiting in *disguise* even the favored mortals, who,

like Ittai, send up their pious aspirations *there*, and live contented with their lot below." The brothers waked as from a dream, resolving to forget all their projects of felicity in *this* life ; which they closed in company with Ittai ; and each half hoped he saw a *gleam* of *Asheri*, as this world gradually receded from their view, and soft futurity advanced to meet them.

Streatham Park, April 3, 1816. — Mrs. Piozzi gave me this (the foregoing) paper in the library. After telling several amusing anecdotes, she mentioned one of Sir R. Jebb. One day somebody had given him a bottle of *castor* oil, very pure ; it had but lately been brought into use. Before he left his home, he gave it in charge to his man, telling him to be careful of it. After the lapse of a considerable time, Sir Richard asked his servant for the oil. "O, it's all used !" replied he. "Used !" said Sir Richard ; "how and when, Sir ?" "I put it in the *castor* when wanted, and gave it to the company." The way of telling this story by Mrs. Piozzi added to the humor, and renders all description useless. — *Sir James Fellowes.*

HER CHARACTER OF THRALE.

As this is *Thraliana*, I will now write Mr. *Thrale's* character in it. It is not because I am in good or ill-humor with him or he with me, for we are not capricious people, but have, I believe, the same opinion of each other at all places and times.

Mr. Thrale's person is manly, his countenance agreeable, his eyes steady and of the deepest blue; his look neither soft nor severe, neither sprightly nor gloomy, but thoughtful and intelligent; his address is neither caressive nor repulsive, but unaffectedly civil and decorous; and his manner more completely free from every kind of trick or particularity than I ever saw any person's. He is a man wholly, as I think, out of the power of mimicry. He loves money, and is diligent to obtain it; but he loves liberality too, and is willing enough both to give generously and to spend fashionably. His passions either are not strong, or else he keeps them under such command that they seldom disturb his tranquillity or his friends; and it must, I think, be something more than common which can affect him strongly, either with hope, fear, anger, love, or joy. His regard for his father's memory is remarkably great, and he has been a most exemplary brother; though, when the house of his favorite sister was on fire, and we were all alarmed with the account of it in the night, I well remember that he never rose, but bidding the servant who called us to go to her assistance, quietly turned about and slept to his usual hour. I must give another trait of his tranquillity on a different occasion. He had built great casks holding 1,000 hogsheads each, and was much pleased with their profit and appearance. One day, however, he came down to Streatham as usual to dinner, and after hearing and talking of a hundred trifles, "But I forgot," says he, "to tell you how one of my great casks is burst, and all the beer run out."

Mr. Thrale's sobriety, and the decency of his conversation,

being wholly free from all oaths, ribaldry and profaneness, make him a man exceedingly comfortable to live with ; while the easiness of his temper and slowness to take offence add greatly to his value as a domestic man. Yet I think his servants do not much love him, and I am not sure that his children have much affection for him ; low people almost all indeed agree to abhor him, as he has none of that officious and cordial manner which is universally required by them, nor any skill to dissemble his dislike of their coarseness. With regard to his wife, though little tender of her person, he is very partial to her understanding ; but he is obliging to nobody, and confers a favor less pleasingly than many a man refuses to confer one. This appears to me to be as just a character as can be given of the man with whom I have now lived thirteen years ; and though he is extremely reserved and uncommunicative, yet one must know something of him after so long acquaintance. Johnson has a very great degree of kindness and esteem for him, and says if he would talk more, his manner would be very completely that of a perfect gentleman.

(Here follow Master Pepys' verses addressed to Thrale on his wedding-day, October, 1776.)

People have a strange propensity to making vows on trifling occasions, a trick one would not think of, but I once caught my husband at it, and have since then been suspicious that 't is oftener done than believed. For example : Mr. Thrale and I were driving through E. Grinstead, and found the inn we used to put up at destroyed by fire. He expressed great uneasiness, and I still kept crying, "Why can we not go to the other inn ? 't is a very good house ; here is no difficulty in the case." All this while Mr. Thrale grew violently impatient, endeavored to bribe the postboy to go on to the next post-town, &c., but in vain ; till, pressed by inquiries and solicitations he could no longer elude, he confessed to me that he had sworn an oath or made a vow, I forget which, seventeen years before, never to set his foot within those doors again, having had some fraud practised on him by a landlord who then kept the house, but had been dead long enough ago. When I heard this all was well ; I desired him to sit in the chaise while the horses were changed, and walked into the house myself to get some refreshment the while.

In 1779, June, after his recovery from the first fit of paralysis, she writes : —

His head is as clear as ever ; his spirits indeed are low, but they will mend ; few people live in such a state of preparation for eternity, I think, as my dear master has done since I have been connected with him ; regular in his public and private devotions, constant at the Sacrament, temperate in his appetites, moderate in his passions, — he has less to apprehend from a sudden summons than any man I have known who was young and gay, and high in health and fortune like him.

TRANSLATION OF LAURA BASSI'S VERSES.

MESSER CHRISTOFORO, who showed us the Specola at Bologna, and made his short but pathetic eulogium on the lamented Dottoressa, pointed with his finger (I believe he could not speak) to her much-admired and well-known verses on the gate: —

“ Si tibi pulchra domus, si splendida mensa, — quid inde ?
 Si species auri, argenti quoque massa, — quid inde ?
 Si tibi sponsa decens, si sit generosa, — quid inde ?
 Si tibi sunt nati ; si prædia magna, — quid inde ?
 Si fueris pulcher, fortis, divesve, — quid inde ?
 Si doceas alios in qualibet arte ; — quid inde ?
 Si longus servorum inserviat ordo : — quid inde ?
 Si faveat mundus, si prospera cuncta, — quid inde ?
 Si prior, aut abbas, si dux, si papa, — quid inde ?
 Si felix annos regnes per mille, — quid inde ?
 Si rota Fortunæ se tollit ad astra, — quid inde ?
 Tam cito, tamque cito fugiunt hæc ut nihil, — inde.
 Sola manet Virtus ; nos glorificabimur, — inde.
 Ergo Deo pare, bene nam tibi provenit — inde.”

I brought them home, of course, and tried to translate them ; but ventured not the translation out of my sight till now.

26th October, 1815.

TRANSLATION OR IMITATION OF LAURA BASSI'S VERSES.

Thy mansion splendid, and thy service plate,
 Thy coffers filled with gold ; — well ! what of that ?
 Thy spouse the envy of all other men,
 Thy children beautiful and rich, — what then ?
 Vig'rous thy youth, unmortgaged thy estate,
 Of arts the applauded teacher ; what of that ?
 Troops of acquaintance, and of slaves a train,
 This world's prosperity complete, — what then ?

Prince, pope, or emperor's thy smiling fate,
With a long life's enjoyment, — what of that ?
By Fortune's wheel tost high beyond our ken,
Too soon shall following Time cry — Well ! what then ?
Virtue alone remains ; on Virtue wait,
All else *I* sweep away ; — but what of that ?
Trust God, and Time defy : eternal is your date.

A FRIGHTFUL STORY.

HERE (at Florence) our little English coterie printed a book, and called it the "Florence Miscellany," — you have seen it at my lodgings, — and here, one day, for a frolic, we betted a wager who could invent the most frightful story, and produce by dinner-time.* The clock struck three, and by five we were to meet again.

Merry brought a very fine one, but Mr. Greatheed burned his, and the following

"FRAGMENT OF A SCENE NEAR NAPLES"

carried off the palm of victory.

He tore her from the bleeding body of her husband, and throwing her across his horse, spurred him forward, till even the imaginary noises, which for a while pursued his flight, began to fade away and leave him leisure to reanimate his brutal passion. He alighted in a distant and deserted place, and by the faint light which the new moon afforded some moments ere she sunk below the horizon, examined his companion, and found her — dead. A crowd of horrid images possessed his mind, but that which prevailed was the fear of discovery. He regained his seat, intent upon escape, but the horse trembled, and refused to stir. Ruggiero resolved to lose no time in fruitless contentions with his steed, but fly away as fast as it was possible. He ran for a full hour, then found himself entangled by some unseen substance that hindered him from proceeding.

The mountain, which had for thirty years been silent, then gave a hollow groan. Ruggiero knew not that it was the mountain; but a column of blue flame shot up from the crater convinced him, while gathering clouds and solemn stillness of the

* A somewhat similar compact or competition produced "Frankenstein" and "The Vampire."

air announced an approaching earthquake. Ruggiero's joints began to loosen with the united sensations of guilt and fear; surrounded on all sides by torrents of indurated lava,—which he recollected to have heard flowed from Vesuvius the year that he was born, when both his parents perished in the flames, and he himself was saved as if by miracle,—his feet stood fixed by difficulty, whilst his mind ran rapidly over past events. The mountain now swelled with a second sigh, more solemn than before. The hollow ground heaved under him, and by the light of an electric cloud which caught the blaze as it blew over the hill, he happily discovered a distant crucifix, and seeking with steps become somewhat more steady to gain it. Tears for the first time eased his heart, and gave hope of returning humanity. Ruggiero now prayed for life only that he might gain time to request forgiveness; and after a variety of penances courageously endured, he lives at this day, a hermit on Vesuvius,—religion making that residence delightful, the sight of which, when guilty, chilled him with horror,—and he scruples not to relate the story of his conversion to those who, passing that way, are sure to partake his hospitality.

This story was never seen since that day by any one.

DELLA CRUSCA VERSES.

AMONG many other undeserved praises I received at generous Florence, I select these from Mr. Merry, whom we called Della Crusca, because he was a member of their academy : —

“ O you ! whose piercing azure eye
 Reads in each heart the feelings there ;
 You ! that with purest sympathy
 Our transports and our woes can share ;
 You ! that by fond experience prove
 The virtuous bliss of Piozzi's love ;
 Who while his breast affection warms,
 With merit heightens music's charms ;

“ O deign to accept the verse sincere,
 Nor yet deride my rustic reed ;
 But pitying wait my woes to hear,
 For pity sure is folly's meed :
 The good, the liberal, and the kind
 Possess a tolerating mind :
 Nor view the madman with a frown
 Because of straw he weaves a crown.”

These were sincere verses indeed ; for he wanted me not to join the Greatheeds and Parsons and Piozzi, who were all persuading him to go home, and not fling any more time away in prosecuting his dangerous passion for Lady Cowper ; while the Grand Duke himself was his rival. I answered his application, poor fellow ! in the concluding verses of our “ Florence Miscellany.” They wanted it larger ; so I said : —

The book's imperfect you declare,
 And Piozzi has not given her share ;
 What's to be done ? some wits in vogue
 Would quickly find an epilogue,

Composed of whim and mirth and satire,
Without one drop of true good nature.
But trust me ; 't is corrupted taste
To make so merry with the last,
When in that fatal word we find
Each foe to gayety combined.
Since parting then — on Arno's shore
We part — perhaps to meet no more,
Let these last lines some truths contain,
More clear than bright, less sweet than plain.

Thou first, to soothe whose feeling heart
The Muse bestowed her lenient art,
Accept her counsel, quit this coast
With only one short lustrum lost,
Nor longer let the tuneful strain
On foreign ears be poured in vain ;
The wreath which on thy brow should live,
Britannia's hand alone can give.
Meanwhile for Bertie* Fate prepares
A mingled wreath of joys and cares,
When politics and party-rage
Shall strive such talents to engage,
And call him to control the great,
And fix the nicely balanced state ;
Till charming Anna's gentler mind,
For storms of faction ne'er designed,
Shall think with pleasure on the times
When Arno listened to his rhymes,
And reckon among Heaven's best mercies
Our Piozzi's voice, and Parson's verses.

Thou, too, who oft has strung the lyre
To liveliest notes of gay desire,
No longer seek these scorching flames,
And trifle with Italian dames,
But haste to Britain's chaster isle,
Receive some fair one's virgin smile,
Accept her vows, reward her truth,
And guard from ills her artless youth.

* Mr. Greatheed. She describes him as completely under the influence of his wife, the charming Anna.

Keep her from knowledge of the crimes
That taint the sweets of warmer climes,
But let her weaker bloom disclose
The beauties of a hothouse rose,
Whose leaves no insects ever haunted,
Whose perfume but to one is granted ;
Pleased with her partner to retire,
And cheer the safe domestic fire.

While I — who, half-amphibious grown,
Now scarce call any place my own —
Will learn to view with eye serene
Life's empty plot and shifting scene,
And trusting still to Heaven's high care,
Fix my firm habitation there ;
'T was thus the Grecian sage of old,
As by Herodotus we're told,
Accused by them who sat above,
As wanting in his country's love —
" 'T is that," cried he, " which most I prize,"
And, pointing upwards, shewed the skies.

ODE TO SOCIETY.

I.

SOCIETY! gregarious dame! *
 Who knows thy favored haunts to name?
 Whether at Paris you prepare
 The supper and the chat to share,
 While fixed in artificial row,
 Laughter displays its teeth of snow;
 Grimace with raillery rejoices,
 And song of many mingled voices,
 Till young coquetry's artful wile
 Some foreign novice shall beguile,
 Who home returned, still prates of thee,
 Light, flippant, French Society.

II.

Or whether, with your zone unbound,
 You ramble gaudy Venice round,
 Resolved the inviting sweets to prove,
 Of friendship warm, and willing love;
 Where softly roll th' obedient seas,
 Sacred to luxury and ease,
 In coffee-house or casino gay
 Till the too quick return of day,
 Th' enchanted votary who sighs
 For sentiments without disguise,
 Clear, unaffected, fond, and free,
 In Venice finds Society.

III.

Or if to wiser Britain led,
 Your vagrant feet desire to tread

* See *ante*, p. 137. Moore has substituted *Posterity* for *Society*. His reports of conversations are both meagre and inaccurate. Thus (Vol. III. p. 196) he says: "In talking of letters being charged by weight, he (Canning) said the post-office once refused to carry a letter of Sir J. Cox Hipplesey's, it was so dull." Canning said "so heavy"; the letter being the worthy baronet's printed letter against Catholic Emancipation.

With measured step and anxious care,
 The precincts pure of Portman Square ; *
 While wit with elegance combined,
 And polished manners there you'll find ;
 The taste correct — and fertile mind :
 Remember vigilance lurks near,
 And silence with unnoticed sneer,
 Who watches but to tell again
 Your foibles with to-morrow's pen ;
 Till tittering malice smiles to see
 Your wonder — grave Society.

IV.

Far from your busy crowded court,
 Tranquillity makes her resort ;
 Where 'mid cold Staffa's columns rude,
 Resides majestic solitude ;
 Or where in some sad Brachman's cell,
 Meek innocence delights to dwell,
 Weeping with unexperienced eye,
 The death of a departed fly :
 Or in Hettruria's heights sublime,
 Where science self might fear to climb,
 But that she seeks a smile from thee,
 And woos thy praise, Society.

V.

Thence let me view the plains below,
 From rough St. Julian's rugged brow ;
 Hear the loud torrents swift descending,
 Or mark the beauteous rainbow bending,
 Till Heaven regains its favorite hue,
 Æther divine ! celestial blue !
 Then bosomed high in myrtle bower,
 Viewed lettered Pisa's pendent tower ;
 The sea's wide scene, the port's loud throng,
 Of rude and gentle, right and wrong ;
 A motley group which yet agree
 To call themselves Society.

* The residence of her old rival, Mrs. Montague.

VI.

Oh! thou still sought by wealth and fame,
 Dispenser of applause and blame:
 While flatt'ry ever at thy side,
 With slander can thy smiles divide;
 Far from thy haunts, O let me stray,
 But grant one friend to cheer my way,
 Whose converse bland, whose music's art,
 May cheer my soul, and heal my heart;
 Let soft content our steps pursue,
 And bliss eternal bound our view:
 Power I'll resign, and pomp, and glee,
 Thy best-loved sweets, — Society.

DIDO EPIGRAMS.

We were speaking the other day of the famous epigram
 in Ausonius: —

“Infelix Dido, nulli bene nupta marito,
 Hoc moriente fugis, hoc fugiente peris.”

Two lords, in vain, unlucky Dido tries,
 One dead, she flies the land; one fled, she dies.*

“Pauvre Didon! on t'a réduite
 De tes maris le triste sort;
 L'un en mourant cause ta fuite,
 L'autre en fuyant cause ta mort,”

is reckoned a beautiful version of this epigram.

There is, however, a very old passage in Davison, alluding to
 the same story: —

* To the same class of *jeux d'esprit* as this epitaph on Dido, belongs one made
 on Thynne, “Tom of Ten Thousand,” after his assassination by Konigsmark,
 who wished to marry the widow, the heiress of the Percys. Thynne's marriage
 had not been consummated, and he was said to have promised marriage to a
 maid of honor whom he had seduced.

“Here lies Tom Thynne of Longleat Hall,
 Who never would so have miscarried,
 Had he married the woman he lay withal,
 Or lay with the woman he married.”

“ O, most unhappy Dido !
 Unlucky wife, and eke unhappy widow :
 Unhappy in thy honest mate,
 And in thy love unfortunate.”

When Lady Bolingbroke led off the Crim. Con. Dance, about thirty-five years ago, the town made a famous bustle concerning her ladyship's name, — Diana. She married Topham Beauclerc, and when her first husband died, some wag made these verses : —

“ Ah ! lovely, luckless Lady Di,
 So oddly linked to either spouse,
 Who can your Gordian knot untie ?
 Or who dissolve your double vows ?

“ And where will our amazement lead to,
 When we survey your various life ?
 Whose living lord made you a widow,
 Whose dead one leaves you still a wife.”

Can you endure any more nonsense about Dido ?

“ Make me (says a college tutor) some verses on the gerunds *di, do, dum*, as a punishment for the strange grammatical fault I found in your last composition.”

“ Here they are, Sir ” —

When Dido's spouse to Dido would not come,
 Then Dido wept in silence, and was Dido dumb.

Will it amuse you to read some of the unmerited praises I picked up in this charming society ? When we all stood round the pianoeforte, and I felt encouraged to reply to Bertola's complimentary verses, which were certainly improvised ; when he sung : —

“ Esser mi saran fatali
 Cento rivali e cento ;
 Ma più che i miei rivali
 La tua virtù pavento.

“ Non in sen d' angliche mura
 I tuoi be' lumi al dì se schiuse ;
 Tu nascesti, de un dio me lo giura,
 Ove nacquero le Muse.”

To which I replied : —

Delicati al par che forti
 Son li versi di Bertola ;
 Dolce suon che mi consola
 Mentre lui cantando v`a ;

Ma tentando d' imitarli
 S' io m' ingegno, — oh, Dio ! invano ;
 Dall' inusitata mano,
 Il plettrino cascherà.

We were in a large company last night, where a beautiful woman of quality came in dressed according to the present taste, with a gauze head-dress, adjusted turban-wise, and a heron's feather ; the neck wholly bare. Abate Bertola bid me look at her, and, recollecting himself a moment, made this epigram improvised : —

Volto e crin hai di Sultana,
 Perchè mai mi vien disdetto,
 Sodducente Mussulmana
 Di gittarti il *fazzoletto* ?

of which I can give no better imitation than the following : —

While turbaned head and plumage high
 A Sultanness proclaims my Cloe ;
 Thus tempted, though no Turk, I'll try
 The handkerchief you scorn — to throw ye.

This is however a weak specimen of his powers, whose charming fables have so completely, in my mind, surpassed all that has ever been written in that way since La Fontaine. I am strongly tempted to give one little story, and translate it too : —

Una lucertoletta
 Diceva al cocodrillo,
 Oh quanto mi diletta
 Di veder finalmente
 Un della mia famiglia
 Si grande e sì potente !
 Ho fatto mille miglia
 Per venirvi a vedere,

Mentre tra noi si serba
 Di voi memoria viva ;
 Benche fuggiam tra l' erba
 E il sassoso sentiero :
 In sen però non langue
 L' onor del prisco sangue.

L' anfibio rè dormiva
 A questi complimenti,
 Pur sugli ultimi accenti
 Dal sonno se riscosse
 E dimandò chi fosse ?
 La parentela antica,
 Il viaggio, la fatica,
 Quella torno a dire,
 Ed ei torne a dormire.
 Lascia i grandi ed i potenti,
 A sognar per parenti ;
 Puoi cortesi stimarli
 Se dormon mentre parli.

Walking full many a weary mile,
 The lizard met the crocodile,
 And thus began : " How fat, how fair,
 How finely guarded, sir, you are !
 'Tis really charming thus to see
 One's kindred in prosperity ;
 I've travelled far to find your coast,
 But sure the labor was not lost,
 For you must think we don't forget
 Our loving cousin, now so great,
 And though our humble habitations
 Are such as suit our slender stations,
 The honor of the lizard blood
 Was never better understood."

Th' amphibious prince, who slept content,
 Ne'er listening to her compliment,
 At this expression raised his head,
 And, " Pray who are you ? " coolly said.
 The little creature now renewed
 Her history of toils subdued,

Her zeal to see her cousin's face,
 The glory of her ancient race,
 But looking nearer found my lord
 Was fast asleep again, and snored.
 Ne'er press upon a rich relation
 Raised to the ranks of higher station;
 Or, if you will disturb your coz,
 Be happy that he does but doze.

Here, then, are Abate Ravasi's verses, — which he called his

PARTENZA.

Ah ! non resiste il cuore
 A vedermi lasciar,
 Io sento a palpitar
 Ei manca, ei muore.
 E in mezzo a tal dolore
 Co' tronchi accenti,
 Co' flebili lamenti,
 Altro non sa dir l' animo mio,
 Ch' addio, gran donna ! eccelsa, donna, addio !

RÓNDO.

Ne' viaggi tuoi rammentati
 D' un fido servidor ;
 Nell' Inghilterra ancor,
 Non ti scordar di me.
 Ch' io, dovunque vado,
 Sempre verràmmi in mente,
 Che donna si eccellente
 Non trovasi di te.
 Conservami l' amico
 L' amato tuo consorte,
 Dilli che anche la morte
 Potrà violar mia fè.

VERSES ON BUFFON.

WHILE we were daily receiving some tender adieux from our Milanese friends, the famous Buffon died, and changed the conversation. He was blind a few days before his death, and occasioned this epigram : —

“ Ah ! s’il est vrai que Buffon perd les yeux,
 Que le jour se refuse au foyer des lumières :
 La nature à la fin punit les curieux,
 Qui pénétoient tous ses mystères.”

The Abate Bossi translated it thus : —

“ Ah ! s’è ver che Buffon cieco diventa,
 Se alle pupille sue il dì s’asconde ;
 Natura alla fin gelosa confonde
 Chi entro gl’ arcani suoi penetrar tenta.”

Buffon’s bright eyes at length grow dim,
 Dame Nature now no more will yield ;
 Or longer lend her light to him
 Who all her mysteries revealed.

This last of course was done by your own little friend, who was careful to preserve a power over her own language, although beginning almost to *think* in Italian, by such constant use.

FLORENCE MISCELLANY.

Dedication (writer not specified).

WHAT a whimsical task, my dear friends, you impose
 To contribute a fine Dedication in prose !
 Our Piozzi, methinks, is much fitter for this,
 For she writes the Preface, and can't write amiss.
 But my thoughts neither beautiful are nor sublime,
 So I wrap them in metre, and tag them with rhyme,
 Like theatrical dresses, if tinselled enough,
 The tinsel one stares at, nor thinks of the stuff,

We mean not our book for the public inspection,
 Then why should we court e'en a Monarch's protection ?
 For too oft the good Prince such a critic of lays is,
 He scarcely knows how to peruse his own praises.
 Ourselves and our friends we for Patrons will chuse,
 No others will read us, and these will excuse.

*Preface, by Mrs. Piozzi.**

PREFACES to Books, like Prologues to Plays, will seldom be found to invite readers, and still less often to convey importance. Excuses for mean Performances add only the baseness of submission to poverty of sentiment, and take from insipidity the praise of being inoffensive. We do not however by this little address mean to deprecate public Criticism, or solicit Regard ; why we wrote the verses may be easily explain'd, we wrote them to divert ourselves, and to say kind things of each other ; we collected them that our reciprocal expressions of kindness might not be lost, and we printed them because we had no reason to be ashamed of our mutual partiality.

Portrait Painting, though unadorn'd by allegorical allusions and unsupported by recollection of events or places, will be esteem'd for ever as one of the most durable methods to keep Ten-

* See *ante*, p. 90.

derness alive and preserve Friendship from decay ; nor do I observe that the room here where Artists of many Ages have contributed their own likenesses to the Royal Gallery is less frequented than that which contains the statue of a slave and the picture of a Sybil. Our little Book can scarcely be less important to Readers of a distant Age or Nation than we ourselves are ready to acknowledge it ; the waters of a mineral spring which sparkle in the glass, and exhilarate the spirits of those who drink them on the spot, grow vapid and tasteless by carriage and keeping ; and though we have perhaps transgress'd the Persian Rule of sitting silent till we could find something important or instructive to say, we shall at least be allow'd to have glisten'd innocently in Italian sunshine, and to have imbibed from its rays the warmth of mutual Benevolence, though we have miss'd the hardness and polish that some coarser Metal might have obtain'd by heat of equal force. I will not however lengthen out my Preface ; if the Book is but a feather, tying a stone to it can be no good policy, though it were a precious one ; the lighter body would not make the heavy one swim, but the heavy body would inevitably make the light one sink.

SOCIAL VERSES.

ON Tuesday evening, the 26th December, 1815 (writes Mr. Fellowes), we met at the Vineyards, our conversation led to the House of Commons, and my father expressed a wish that I had been a member, adding that he believed I should have followed that line with more pleasure than physic. Mrs. Piozzi assented to this, in her usual good-humored complimentary manner. I made an observation about illusion, &c., and something was said about Spain, and the beauties of the language, and I read the following Spanish verses to her, which pleased from their simplicity and neatness : —

“ La otra noche soñaba,
 Que feliz sueño,
 A decirte lo iba,
 Pero no quieso.
 Permita el Amor,
 Que algun dia tu sueñes,
 Lo que soné yo.”

On the following morning I received from Mrs. Piozzi these lines : —

“ The amorous Spaniard’s glowing dream,
 Joined with our doctor’s soberer scheme,
 Caused in my brain confusion ;
 Yet when before my closing eyes,
 I saw Saint Stephen’s chapel rise,
 Say, was that all illusion ?

“ O, if the stream of eloquence,
 I saw you gracefully dispense,
 Was fancied all and vain :
 Daylight no more I wish to see,
 But drive back dull reality,
 And turn to dream again.

“ Mr. Linton takes this imitation of the verses you showed me last night.

H. L. P.”

During her stay in Italy (writes Sir J. Fellowes) in this delightful society, upon the banks of the Arno, which was duly enlivened by brilliant wit and classic taste, the conversation often turned upon more serious subjects, and one day it was proposed to write an impromptu upon the fatal monosyllable *now*, the present passing away even before the word is written that explains it. This pretty quatrain was produced by Della Crusca, who had been asserting that all past actions are nihilitic, and that the immediate moment was the whole of human existence :

“ One endless Now stands o’er th’ eventful stream
Of all that may be with colossal stride ;
And sees beneath life’s proudest pageants gleam,
And sees beneath the wrecks of empire glide.”

To this H. L. P. replied : —

“ T is yours the present moment to redeem,
And powerful snatch from Time’s too rapid stream ;
While self-impelled, the rest redundant roll,
Slumbering to stagnate in oblivion’s pool.”

LINES WRITTEN JULY 28TH, 1815.

Is it of intellectual powers,
Which time develops, time devours,
Which twenty years perhaps are ours,
That man is vain ?

Of such the infant shows no sign,
And childhood shuns the dazzling shine,
Of knowledge bright with rays divine,
As mental pain.

Still less when passion bears the sway,
Unbridled youth brooks no delay,
He drives dull reason far away,
With scorn avowed.

For twenty years she reigns at most,
Labor and study pay the cost ;
Just to be raised is all our boast,
Above the crowd.

Sickness then fills the uneasy chair,
Sorrow, and loss, and strife, and care ;
While faith just saves us from despair,
Wishing to die.

Till the farce ends as it began,
Reason deserts the dying man,
And leaves to encounter as he can
Eternity.

ON A WEEPING WILLOW PLACED OVER AGAINST THE SUNDIAL
AT BRYNBELLA, NOV. 28TH, 1802.

Mark how the weeping willow stands
Near the recording stone ;
It seems to blame our idle hands,
And mourn the moments flown.

Thus conscience holds our fancy fast,
With care too oft affected,
Pretending to lament the past,
The present still neglected.

Yet shall the swift improving plant
With spring her leaves resume,
Nor let the example *she* can grant
Descend on winter's gloom.

Loiter no more, then, near the tree,
Nor on the dial gaze ;
If but an hour be given to thee,
Act right while yet it stays.

ON A WATCH.

When Pleasure marks each hour that flies,
And Youth rejoyces in his prime,
It may be good, it may be wise,
To watch with care the flight of time.

But now ; — when friends and hours are seen
 To part, and ne'er return again ;
 Who would admit of a machine
 To mark how few there yet remain ?

I am asked to produce some *étrennes* for dear Mrs. Lutwyche.
 Will these verses do, accompanied by a bouquet ? —

The charms we find Maria still possess,
 Deciduous plants like these but ill express :
Your emblem in a brighter clime we see,
 No season robs of flowers — the Orange-Tree.

HER LAST VERSES.

TIME, DEATH, AND H. L. P.

MORS (*loquitur*).

Tell her, old Time of foot so fleet,
 Once caught, she can't our strokes avoid :

H. L. P.

I know it; but when next we meet,
 'T will be to see you both destroyed.

L E T T E R S .



LETTERS.

THE two brothers to whom the first batch of the following letters are addressed, were members of a county family settled for more than two centuries at Hempsted in Gloucestershire. Both were eminently distinguished by the extent and variety of their antiquarian and literary acquirements, as well as highly esteemed for their social qualities. It is sufficient to mention their principal work, the "Magna Britannia," which they undertook in copartnership. The younger, Samuel, afterwards Keeper of the Records in the Tower and a V. P. R. S., was presented to Johnson and favorably received by him; but the acquaintance commenced only a few months before Johnson's death.

The present proprietor of Hempsted Court and rector of Rodmarton (the family living) amply sustains the hereditary reputation of his family, being the author of several works of learning, ingenuity, and research.

A selection of letters from Mrs. Piozzi to the same gentlemen, of an earlier date, appeared in "Bentley's Miscellany," in 1849.

To the Rev. Daniel Lysons.

4 o'clock in the morning of
Saturday 16, 1794.

DEAR MR. LYSONS, — Here are we returned home from a concert at one house, a card assembly at a second, a ball and supper at a third. The pain in my side, which has tormented me all evening, should not, however, have prevented my giving the girls their frolic, and enjoying your company myself; but servants and horses can't stand it *if I can*, and even Cecilia consents not to be waked in four hours after she lies down. Excuse us all, therefore, and believe me ever truly yours,

H. L. PIOZZI.

To the Rev. Daniel Lysons.

Denbigh, N. W., Wednesday,
7th January, 1795.

DEAR MR. LYSONS, — I write to you, knowing that you are stationary, and you will tell your brother that we are coming back to Streatham Park, where our first pleasure will be to see and converse with our long absent friends, among which I hope long to reckon you both. Many strange events, but I think no good ones, have taken place since we parted; yet, although many accidents have happened, I see not that the fog clears or dissipates, so as to give us any good view of the end yet. Those who live nearer the centre may perhaps obtain better intelligence, and see further than we do; and more light may break in still before the fourth or fifth of February, when we shall request *your* company, or *his*, or *both* for a day's comfortable chat. What do the Opposition say concerning their projects for peace with a nation that continues, or rather renews, predatory hostilities, while the armistice (themselves were contented to grant) remains in full force?

Has no caricatura print been made yet of a Frenchman shaking Nic Frog by the hand in a *sinister* manner, at the same time that the other arm is employed in cutting his throat? They are terrible fellows, to be sure; and if they take Pampeluna, the King and Queen of Spain will have to run away from Madrid, as the Stadtholder and his lady from Holland, I suppose; so you will do well to finish your Environs of London* quickly while *that* lasts.

How do your amiable neighbors, the Miss Pettiwards? You will have dear Siddons amongst you soon, I hear, for they have taken Mr. Cologon's pretty villa. Write once more, do, before we meet, and say you will come to Streatham Park soon, and make a world of chat with my master, and Cecy, and, dear Sir, yours ever, very sincerely,

H. L. PROZZI.

Pick me up some literary intelligence if any can be found. I

* Mr. Lysons was engaged in a topographical work entitled "The Environs of London."

hear Miss Burney that was — Madame D'Arblaye — is writing for the stage.

To the Rev. Daniel Lysons.

Denbigh, Sunday night, 15th February, 1795.

DEAR MR. LYSONS, — A thousand thanks for your letter, and literary intelligence. I suspect the tragedy, &c.,* will prove a second Chattertonism; this is an age of imposture. What became of the philosopher in St. Martin's Lane, who advertised a while ago that he gave life and motion to stone figures, that moved and turned in every direction at the word of command? I never saw it in the paper but once; 't was a curious advertisement. So is Mr. Kemble's *in another way*; he has proved himself no conjurer, sure, to get into such a scrape, but Alexander and Statira will pull him out, I suppose.† Poor dear Mrs. Siddons is never well long together, always *some* torment, body or mind, or both. Are people only *sick* in London (by the way), or do they *die*? not of any one contagious disorder, but of various maladies. I suspect there is disposition to mortality in the town, sure enough, for never did I read of so many deaths together; these violent changes from cold to heat, and from heat to cold, occasion a great deal of it.

For the Princess of Wales, I think little about her just now, and still less about that horrid Mr. Brothers; but it will be a dreadful thing to see the King and Queen of Spain setting out upon *their* travels, as appears by no means improbable, if the French are in possession of Pampeluna. The Spaniards can fight nothing but *bulls*; we shall have that royal family unroosted, I verily believe, and in a few months too. The capture of Holland will seem a light thing in comparison of so heavy a calamity when it comes to pass, for all the riches of Mexico will then drop into the wrong scale.

"But we will not be over-exquisite
To scan the fashion of uncertain evils,"

* The celebrated Ireland forgeries.

† He was obliged to make a public apology for indecorous behavior to a lady, afterwards his sister-in-law.

as Milton says ; but keep out famine by liberality, and contagion by cleanliness, as long as ever we can ; loving our gallant seamen meantime, and rewarding them with all the honors and profits old England has to bestow.

I should like to read your Fast sermon ; we shall have a very good one *here*, for among other comforts, Denbigh possesses that of an excellent preacher and reader. Pray tell how the day is observed in London and its environs : I shall be curious to hear ; and do assure you with the greatest sincerity that letters from you and your brother are most desirable treats. He is cruel, though, and keeps close *Mum*. Pray are the Greatheeds in town ? what do they say of Mr. Kemble's conduct ? and what of their countryman Shakespeare's extraordinary resuscitation ? It seems to me a sort of tub to the whale, a thing to catch attention, and detain it from other matters. When we see Mr. Lloyd of Wickwor, whom we here justly call the philosopher, I shall find what *he* thinks of the discovery. Give my kindest regards to your very amiable neighbors, Miss Pettiwards ; they must take *double* care of their mother now, if possible, for all the people past a certain age seem to be dropping off.

'T is very wicked in me to send you these sixpennyworths of interrogations every time I feel my ignorance of what passes in the world painful to myself, or disgraceful among those whom I wish to entertain ; but whoever is rich will be borrowed from ; so Adieu ! and write soon, and accept my master's and Cecilia's best compliments from, dear Sir, yours most faithfully,

H. L. PROZZI.

To the Rev. Daniel Lysons.

Brynbellia, 9th February, 1796.

You really can scarcely believe, dear Mr. Lysons, how much entertainment and pleasure was given us by your agreeable and friendly letter, in which however you do not mention your brother, but I doubt not he is well and happy. You do not mention the high price of provisions neither, though sufficient to make everybody *unhappy* ; but this mild season, and good plenty of coals, I trust, contribute to keep people quiet, assisted by our

new laws against sedition. I have found a wise book at last — Miss Thrale sent it me — on Monopoly and Reform of Manners ; printed for Faulder. It should be given about, I think, like Hannah More's penny books, and got by heart for a task by servants, apprentices, &c., and much finer people, though *they* are too fine by half.

The Chinese embassy * will not tempt three guineas out of my pocket, say *what* they will, and say it *how* they will. Æneas Anderson has convinced me that it was an empty business at best.

Your account of Shakespear's being forged and fooled after so many years peace and quietness, most exactly tallies with what my heart told me upon reading the queen's supposed letter to him in our newspaper. I have seen no other, but was struck with the word *amuse*. She would have said *pastyme*. The other phrase was hardly received in France (whence we got it) so early as the days of Elizabeth. The dates, however, are decisive, when you tell me she is made to promote the *amusement* of a man then known to be dead. The Earl of Leicester was ranger here of Denbigh Green, you know ; and my ancestor, Salusbury of Bachygraig, opposed his innovation when he sought to enclose the common for his use. The tyrant followed him up, though, till he got his life ; and not contented with that, brought his first cousin, Salusbury of Llewenny, — my *mother's* ancestor, — to death likewise, by way of revenge ; all which shall serve as my pretext for a good piece of the Green whenever it is ordered for cultivation. Meantime, let me request an early narrative of Vortigern's success. I think they will pluck his painted vest from him, but we shall see.

It has been long matter of surprise to me that the less-instructed part of our common audiences in London never miss being right in their judgment of a play, or even of the language ; for as to incidents, those are as obvious to one set of men as to another, if probable or not. But what I mean is this : when Lady Macbeth tells them that the grooms of Duncan's chamber she will with wine and wassel so *convince*, &c., they think it (as it cer-

* The work on Lord Macartney's Embassy to China, price three guineas.

tainly is) perfectly right, and in character with the times; but let Cumberland or Jephson use the same phrase, and say they will *convince* a knot of friends with *drink*, a loud shout of laughter would, without any instigation, burst from the upper gallery; every single member of which, talked to apart, would appear to know very little, if anything, concerning the history of their native tongue. For these reasons it is scarce a fair wager how this new tragedy is received, without they bring it out in Shakespear's name, which I do think would save it harmless, so long as they believed the imposition.

Meantime, I see by the newspapers people continue to insult the king, throwing stones at him as he passes. Methinks the very word *stone* should be offensive to all his family: one mad fool of the name persecuted Princes Sophia, as I remember, with offers of marriage; and this coachmaker or coal-merchant, or what was the anagrammatical gentleman who signed *Enots*, he seems to have escaped by testimonials to his character from the rich Democrates. I think they are all Gall *Stones*, and I heartily wish we were rid of them.

What becomes of the Beavor family? I never write to Mrs. Gillies, because I know she hates letters; but my true esteem of her brave brothers does not lessen by absence. Mrs. D'Arblaye's new novel is not advertised yet. Somebody told me Lady Eglington is turned writer now she has married the son of Doctor More; but perhaps it was a joke. Will Miss Farren's coronet *never* be put on? I thought the paralytic countess would have made way for her long ago.

Dear, charming Siddons keeps her empire over all hearts still, I hope; if an Irish plan takes place in her arrangements this spring, we shall not despair to see her at Brynbella. Tell her so with my true love.

There is a new pamphlet supposed by Jones, the Hutchinsonian, to say that our Saviour's Coming (but not the end of the world) is at hand. I cannot recollect the title of it, but do buy and send it to Streatham Park with any other *little* thing worth notice, but no three-guinea books. I wonder who wrote the small tract about Monopoly; 't is monstrously clever, and clever *only*

because *it's true*. So is my conclusion of this letter, saying that I am most sincerely, dear Sir, yours,

H. L. Piozzi.

My master* unites in compliments.

To the Rev. Daniel Lysons.

Brynbella, 9th July, 1796.

DEAR MR. LYSONS, — This is a letter of mere request, to beg remembrances from old and distant friends. Do pray write now and then, and make me up a good long letter of *small London chat*; you can scarcely think how welcome *living* intelligence is to those who have chiefly the *dead* to converse with, and I work hard at *old* stuff all morning, and sigh for some *evening* conversation about literature and politics, and the common occurrences of the day.

Esher, or *Asher*, in Surrey, is a place I cannot find in your Environs. It was my grandmother's property, and she sold it to the Pelhams; *her* mother lies buried there with a painted or colored monument, if I recollect rightly, though 't is many years since I saw it. Mr. Piozzi used to promise me a drive thither, but we never went.

Hume says that Cardinal Wolsey retired to that seat when the king withdrew his favor from him; and Mr. Fitzmaurice, from whose library I borrowed the book, queries the place, and doubts whether he ever was there; although Stowe tells — for I remember it — how Wolsey alighted from his horse in the road between Asher and Richmond, to receive the ring which Henry sent him, and threw himself on his knees in the dirt from thankfulness that he was not *wholly* out of favor. I wish you would set me right. Likewise I want to know where the spot once called Castle-risings now stands. Edward II.'s queen Isabella was confined there to her death, but lived very grand, I trust, for she had £3,000 a year, a sum equal to a royal jointure *now*, I suppose. Hume says it *was* ten miles from London, and it must be nearer *now*.

* It is curious that she could call her second husband by this name, so well calculated to revive the memory of her first.

Do Mr. Walpole's works sell, and is his *Love Story* that you once read to me in them? I liked the letters to Hannah More mightily.

If Mr. Bunbury's *Little Gray Man* is printed, do send it hither; the ladies at Llangollen are dying for it. They like those old Scandinavian tales and the imitations of them exceedingly; and tell me about the prince and princess of *this* loyal country, one province of which alone had disgraced itself; and now no Anglesey militiaman is spoken to by the *Cymrodorion*, but all completely sent to *Coventry*, for nobody wants them in Ireland.

The mysterious expedition of Buonaparte will I hope end at worst in revolutionizing the Greek Islands, and restoring the old names to Peloponnæsus, Eubœa, &c. I should be sorry he ever got to India, but waking the Turks from their long sleep will not grieve me. The Knights of Malta make a *triste figure* at last; I suppose Mr. Weishaupt's emissaries were beforehand with the *hero of Italy*, as they call him.

My husband is particularly disgusted with the people that exalt Buonaparte's personal courage and valorous deeds. "He goes nowhere unless he is called," says Mr. Piozzi; if he wanted to show his *prowess*, why did not he *come here*, or to Ireland? we would have shown him sport; but like Caliban, those fellows *will be wise henceforward and sue for grace*, and worship the French no more, unless they are still greater blunderers than even *I* take them for, who am ever, dear Sir, yours faithfully,

H. L. P.

To the Rev. Daniel Lysons.

Brynbella, 5th Jan. 1796.

DEAR MR. LYSONS, — After making repeated inquiries for you of all our common friends, I begin to find out that the best way is to ask yourself. Dear Siddons was always a slow correspondent, though a kind wellwisher; and she has so much to do in good earnest, that we must forgive her not sitting down to write letters either of fact or sentiment; for a little of both these I apply to *you*, and beg a little chat for information of what is going forward. Tell me, in the first place, concerning your own health and your *wicked* brother's, who forgets his old correspond-

ent very shamefully; after that, let the sedition bills or the Shakespear manuscripts take post according to the bustle made about them in London. Make me understand why Mr. Hayley writes Milton's life, and why Doctor Anderson publishes Johnson's. Those roads are so beaten they will get dust in their own eyes sure, instead of throwing any into the eyes of their readers; at this distance from the scene of action I cannot guess their intents. Tell what other new books attract notice, and what becomes of the Whig Club now 't is divided like Paris into *sections*. I fancy France will be divided into sections at last, — a bit to Royalists, another bit to Republicans; and perhaps the very name of a nation so disgraced by crimes and follies will be lost forever. No matter! I long to see Burke's letter to Arthur Young: *his* predictions have the best claim to attention of any living wight.

O pray what becomes of the man who set mankind a staring this time last year? he is in a madhouse, is not he? We had a slight earthquake about eight or ten weeks ago, and such extraordinary weather as never did I witness; very providential sure that it should continue so warm and mild and open while bread remains at such an advanced price. Yesterday the prospect was clear and bright as spring; nor have we seen ice hitherto; but storms enough to blow the very house down, and I fear prevent our West India fleet from ever arriving at its place of destination. A beautiful prismatic halo round the moon in an elliptic form very elegant on Christmas Day, was said by our rural philosophers to be a rare but certain præcursor of tempest, and so it proved: I was, however, glad to have seen a meteor so uncommon.

Has your brother examined any of the gold from our new mine in Ireland? The bishop showed us some, and Mr. Lloyd, I think, sent specimens to Sir Joseph Banks, — it is supposed purer, and less drugged with alloy than what comes immediately from Peru, could we but get enough of it. Meanwhile *I* had half a ticket in the Irish Lottery with Mr. Murphy, but can hear nothing either of my fortune or my partner. Take compassion do, and send us a long letter. Mr. Piozzi adds his best compliments to mine, with wishes of a happy New Year. The piano-

forte is not quite neglected, though he has lost Mrs. Bagot, who sings such sweet duets. Cecilia and her husband are well and merry ; my other daughters write me word from Clifton that they like Mrs. Pennington and attend her benefit balls, which I am glad of. You will expect no news from me, but I shall be very desirous to receive your thanks for obliging *inquiries*. *They* are all I have to send, except the truest regards of Brynbella to Putney ; and pray tell me that those agreeable Miss Pettwards are well who have probably quite forgotten by this time, dear Mr. Lyson's

Ever faithful humble servant,

H. L. PROZZI.

To the Rev. Daniel Lysons.

Brynbella, Sunday.

(post-mark, 1796.)

DEAR MR. LYSONS, — You have at last written me so kind and so entertaining a letter, that no paper on my part shall be wasted in reproaches ; I thank you very kindly, but you should never suppose me informed of things which *you* cannot help hearing ; but they escape *me* easily enough. I *do* hear of the Arch Duke's successes, however, and of poor Italy's disgrace ; I *hear* of peace too, — when shall we *see* it ? Mr. Ireland is a pleasant gentleman indeed, and his last act his *best* act, in my mind ; absolution follows confession ; I have done being angry with him now. There is a note in Mr. Malone's pamphlet * for which I would give half a dozen publications of fifty pages each *concerning the times* ; it contains my sentiments so exactly that I may easily commend the writer's good sense and sound judgment. The mysteries of Carlton House surpass those of Udolpho : may they end as those do, in mere nihility. I will not quarrel with you for making no reply to my questions about "Camilla," † because I have read it myself, and because these are really not times for any man of the living world to waste his moments in weighing of feathers ; he, however, who neglects to read Burke's last pamphlet, loses much of a very rational pleasure.

I turn the page to talk of yours and your brother's discov-

* Against the Ireland forgeries.

† Madame D'Arbly's novel.

eries,* of which I honestly wish you much joy. There are medals at Capo di Monte with a pagan triumph on one side, and on the other the monogram of Christ; but connoisseurs told me those were Constantine's, who was, you know, enrolled among the heathen gods; but I can give no account of its connection with a temple to Neptune, and what a little temple it is! only thirty feet long; are you sure it is a temple after all? We had a base-born Constantine in Britayne, had we not, about Honorius's time? he made his son Cæsar if I remember well; was he in Dorsetshire? or was this long room mere private property, and Neptune nothing but an ornament,—as he is now? I should like to know if the ☩ was concealed or plainly set in view. Christians wore them of divers kinds I believe in places of persecution, much as the Royalists in France carried the effigies of Louis Seize about them in unsuspected forms; and the ill treatment of those who professed our religion did not cease *immediately* in remote parts of the empire, although it ended in the capital after the outspread Labarum had swept its foes away. Perhaps, too, the mark was not unknown to Constantine, when he saw it somehow miraculously displayed with the Greek words expressive of *In hoc Signo vinces* under it; perhaps (but these are too bold conjectures) it had been a private sign among Christians before, and was exalted only—not first recognized—at the grand battle between him and Maxentius. The 24th chapter of St. Matthew and the 30th verse, give one an idea that it shall again appear; as the *sign* of the Son of Man is there spoken of as *preceding* our Saviour's second coming. There are medals with another monogram upon them resembling the arbitrary mark of a planet, with a triumph on the other side and a hand held out from the clouds; if they mean Constantine, 'tis awkwardly expressed, because he refused to triumph after the ancient manner.

I doubt whether Ætius, thrice consul, to whom the groans of the Britons was a Christian; Placidia we know was. Could *he* have had any share in your marine worship? When the sea drove them back to the barbarians who by dint of num-

* Of Roman antiquities at Woodchester, on which Mr. Samuel Lysons based two valuable publications.

bers forced them forward on the sea, perhaps they tried what pleasing old Neptune might do for them ; some heathens in the Roman army might recommend the measure. Numberless are the connections between Christian and pagan ornaments in Italy. I saw a Madonna in the Vatican with Cybele's tower on her head, and other insignia of that goddess, from the workman's confusion, as it appears, between Mater Dei and Mater Deorum ; and there is an altar in the church where Sannazarius reposes at Naples, decorated with the story of Jupiter and Leda. But I have left no room for Mr. Piozzi's compliments : he talks of being at Streatham Park early next spring, where I hope to thank you for many a kind letter received before that time. Write soon, *do*, and believe me ever with just esteem,

Dear Sir, yours and your brother's obliged
and faithful servant,

H. L. P.

To the Rev. Daniel Lysons.

Brynbella, Thursday.

(No other date, and no post-mark.)

DEAR MR. LYSONS, — Accept a renewal of inquiries, literary and domestic ; but 't is for yourself I inquire ; your brother, we know, is well and busy with his subterranean discoveries. What statues has he found ? they will be very valuable ; and tell me for mercy's sake what this *Apology for the Bible* * means : we live in fine times sure when the Bible wants an apology from the bishops. How is Mr. Burke's book received ? and what will his regicide peace be ? I see no sign of peace except in the books : for they make them ready to battle in all parts of the world, and we shall have the Turks upon us directly if we chase French ships into their very harbors so. No matter ! my half-crown for Flo shall be willingly contributed, though I do think *seriously* that the Dog Tax and Repeal of Game Laws will have an exceeding bad effect on the country, where gentlemen will want inducements to remain when hunting and coursing and shooting are at an end. Horses will lower in price, however, and little oats will be sown at all. I think democracy in all her insidiousness could not have contrived a more certain principle of levelling, and

* Bishop Watson's celebrated answer to Paine and Gibbon.

republicanism in all her pride could not plan more perfect gratification than that of seeing the young farmers' sons cocking their guns in face of a landlord upon whom no man feeling any dependence, he will shelter himself among the crowds of London, and prefer being jostled at Vauxhall by his taylor, to the being robbed of innocent amusements by those who were bred on his land, and fed on his bounty.*

Our Chester paper even now reproaches the rich with their donations of bread and meat, which are already styled *insults* on the *poor's independence*; and Mr. Chappelon, who has been here on a visit, protested he was glad to get *alive* out of Norfolk, because he had presumed to *give* his parishioners barley and potatoe bread, baked in his own oven. I wish you would write me a long letter, and tell me a great deal about the living world; and something of the *dead* too, for I see Mr. Howard's epitaph, but cannot guess who wrote it.

Vortigern will, I trust, be condemned almost without a hearing, so completely does the laugh go against it. This is the age of forgeries. I never read of so many *causes célèbres* in that way as of late; but poor, dear Mrs. Siddons saves Ireland awhile, I suppose, by her ill health, and keeps Miss Lee from fame and fortune which she expects to acquire by "Almeyda." Does Madame D'Arblay's novel promise well? Fanny wrote better before she was married than since, however that came about. I understand nothing concerning the young baronet that lost so much at backgammon. Those tales are seldom true to the extent they are related: much like the stories of mad dogs, which chiefly exist in newspapers; but I fear Lady Westmeath's Divorce Bill, like Mrs. Mullins, will carry conviction of *her* infidelity all over the world. We knew her and her lord at Bath very well. I try every time I write to get some intelligence of the Beavor family, but without effect.

Selden says marriage is the act of a man's life which least concerns his acquaintance, yet, adds he, 't is the very act of his life which they most busy themselves about. Now Heaven knows, I

* If indignation makes verses, it does not supply syntax; and this sentence, which I have not attempted to correct, bears a strong resemblance to that of the county member who described Sir Robert Peel as "not the sort of man that you could put salt upon his tail."

never did disturb myself or him by Dr. Gillies's marriage, though it affected me exceedingly; his amiable lady and her family being of my most favorite acquaintance, and they are all lost to me somehow. Mr. Rogers' name has crost me but once since we left London either: it was when he gave evidence in favor of that *anagrammatic* Mr. Stone,* who wrote his name backwards, as witches are said to do; who deal in deeds of darkness, and sing

"When good kings bleed we rejoice," &c.

How does your book of fashionable *dresses* go on? it must, I think, receive some curious additions by what one hears and *sees*; for a caricature print of a famous fine lady who leads the Mode has already reached poor little Denbigh.

To the Rev. Daniel Lysons.

Brynbella, Tuesday Evening, 1797.

I THANK you very sincerely for the entertaining letter I received the other day. Indeed, my dear Sir, you can scarcely imagine how much a cargo of London chat enlivens our conversation here in the country, where those deceased topics of the town revive and flourish which were withering away upon their native seed-bed. When you have anything fit for transplantation, pray send hither, where there is more soil than trees in almost every sense. Burke's pamphlet and his answerers are in *full bloom* with us *now*; but *you* have forgotten them, I trust, and are busy about what is in succession. Miss Thrale has promised me Watson's Apology. Could you, as you walk about and examine books upon stalls, find me a second, or third, or *thirteenth*-hand History of Poetry, by Warton, or of Music, by Hawkins, I should be much obliged to you; but it must be under a guinea price. I have the good editions myself at Streatham Park. Your book of "Ladies' Dresses" must have received curious addition, by what I see and hear of the present fashions; but cutting off hair is the foolishhest among the foolish. When they are tired of going without clothes, 't is easy putting them on again; but what they will

* On Stone's trial, the author of "The Pleasures of Memory" proved a conversation with him in the streets, tending to show that he made no mystery of that which was charged as treasonable.

do for the poor cropt and shorn heads, now there are no convents, I cannot guess.

Do people rejoice now wheat falls in price? they made heavy lament when it was high, — or do we only sigh for peace that we may be at leisure to meditate mischief?

And so I see that both Ministry and Opposition have at last *agreed* in one point; they join against the *Lapdogs*:

“So when two *dogs* are fighting in the streets,
With a third *dog* one of these two *dogs* meets;
With angry teeth he bites him to the bone,
And this *dog* smarts for what that *dog* had done.”

These verses are somewhat too *soft* and *mellifluous* for the occasion, being Fielding's, but I half long to address a doggrel epistle to Mr. Dent;* he would be as angry as Mr. Parsons, no doubt, and I understand *his* wrath is very great. What becomes of Ireland, I wonder, now *his solemn mockery is ended*. It was a forged bill, you see, and the public did well to protest it.†

If Mrs. Siddons was to work at Drury Lane all winter and run about all summer, she would have had no enjoyment of Putney; and the young ones, for whose sake she is to work and run, would never have delighted in an *out of town* residence. Cecilia is coming to the scene of action, London, where I think there were enough just such half-hatched chickens without her and Mr. Mostyn adding to the number; but then they do not care what I think, so 't is all one. The Bishop of Bangor likes Wales no better than she does, I suppose, but he ought not to have said so; because an old bishop should be wiser than a pretty wench, and much will be endured from *her*, very little from *him*, especially in these days; he is got into a cruel embarrassment.

Tell something about our Princess of Wales and her domestiques, and of our infant queen-expectant, pretty creature! I should somehow like to see that baby excessively. My hope is

* Who gained the nickname of Dog Dent by this piece of legislation.

† “Vortigern” was acted and damned on April 2, 1796. The last audible line was

“And when this solemn mockery is o'er,”

which Kemble was accused of uttering in a manner to precipitate the catastrophe.

that every English heart will devote itself to the service of so much innocence and sweetness.

I depend upon an excellent account of "Almeyda;* the epilogue is charming. Only one fault; 't is an epilogue would do for any play. I call such things verses *to be let*. Prologues and epilogues should, to be perfect, be appropriate, referring to what has been presented, or is to present itself before the audience. This, however, is playful and pretty, and so far as I know or can remember, quite original.

Adieu, dear Sir, and bid your brother not quite forget me. The arm of an old vestal virgin kept under ground since Agri-cola's time, is cold compared with the hand of his and your faithful servant,

H. L. PROZZI.

To the Rev. Daniel Lysons.

Brynella, 3d Sept. 1802.

AND now we are come home at last after an eight months' absence, and a 500 miles' tour, 't is high time to congratulate dear Mr. and Mrs. Lysons on the happy event of which the newspapers informed us, whilst in a *far country*, though none more pleasing than Gloucestershire. We passed a fortnight or three weeks at Cheltenham, where I remembered the pretty planted walk finishing with a tall spire, when I was there a *child* in company of my mother and my aunts; and I *think* I remember the *Smith's* epitaph in the churchyard, because when reading "Camden's Remains" many years after, it came in my head how much cleverer *that* is, which *he* preserves, and in the same style. John English's inscription on his monument was however *too deep* for me then to be struck with, 't is almost *too deep now*. The marking capitals to denote the name of Jesus in that strange way, neither anagram nor acrostic, is exceedingly curious; I warrant you have a true copy of it, and perhaps will give me one. Write to me, dear Mr. Lysons, and *tell* me something. Tell me particularly about the new comer to Rodmorton's, — Health, Strength, and Beauty. The excellence of *so* new a comer will be comprised in those three words; and if the truth were well known, the first implies the other two completely.

* Miss Lee's play.

Here am I without anything to feed on but my own thoughts ; our house is painting and ornamenting, and they have thrust the few books I possess, all into one closet on a heap. My thoughts are fuller than they were though ; by the addition of your brother's kindness in showing me the stone at Somerset House, from which if I could *learn* but little, for want of more skill in languages, I can please my busy fancy well enough, perhaps better than if sullen truth intruded and caught imagination by the bridle. For example, my recollection says, that among the hieroglyphicks I saw a *crow* perpetually, and I *do* think that this same *crow* came originally out of the same nest as old Odin's *reafan* that King Regner Lodbrog's three weird sisters worked for Hialmar, a standard of victory (ladies *still* present consecrated *colors* to the troops you know), and a raven then was the lucky impress in *every* part of the world, which had not perhaps wholly forgotten its being dismissed from the ark as a bird chosen for purpose of fixing future nations in permanent happiness. The Egyptians least of *all* forgot that great event, and when I see in the library at Somerset House a vase brought from the *Musquito shore* adorned with *Grecian* fretwork, I cannot wonder at any marks of affinity between old Coptic and Scandinavian ideas.

Besides does not *Justin* say ? — I told you *true* that I could not get at a book ; does not *some one* say how Ptolemy that finished the Cut from Nile to the Red Sea, and whose *deification act* is said to be now in our antiquarians' room in the Strand, joined with Gallo Greeks and Galatians against Antigonus ? The *Gauls*, wherever planted, considered a crow as their coat armor, if we may call it so ; and lost all courage for that very reason, when the fatal bird perched on a Roman's helmet, called Corvinus from that day by his own countrymen, who readily adopted *all* neighboring superstitions. I do believe the croaking raven* meant victory in hieroglyphic language, and am impatient now till clear translation shows the analogy, and makes some explanation. If the *British Critic* was to see *this* stuff, he would say my letters were in *rhyme* I suppose, as he says "Retrospection" is written in blank verse. Lord bless the people,

* Hardly in Macbeth, Act I. Sc. 3.

what things do come into their heads ! *Mine* is at present very full of Kader Idris : I never saw it till this summer, and a grand sight it is. We crossed South Wales, and bathed in the sea at Tenby ; Mr. Piozzi kept clear of confinement at least, though he complains of being very tender-footed. He unites with me in true regards and *compliments* ; or more properly in sincere *uncomplimentary* good wishes to you and yours ; and bears me witness, that I am always very truly, dear Mr. Lyson's

Faithful servant,

H. L. P.

Pray write me a long letter.

To Samuel Lysons, Esq.

Wednesday, 10th Feb. 1808.

DEAR MR. LYSONS, — I have not written to you a long time, and now I cannot *help* writing. I loved your brother so much, and wished him happy so sincerely, his change of life affects me, and my feelings will not permit me to tell *him* so. Tell him yourself, my good friend, and assure yourself that the account of his wife's death in the papers gave me a sensation beyond what my acquaintance with her called for. But she was pretty when we last met, and she was young, and it seems so odd and melancholy to look in the grave for those one used to see at the tea-table ! Well ! you who live among the records of past life will bear these things better ; my spirits are much depressed by Mr. Piozzi's miserable state of health, nor can the gayeties I hear of draw my attention from the sorrows that I *see*. Mrs. Mostyn has politely taken a week's share of them just now while her sons are absent, and the London winter not begun. *Our* winter commenced in November, and when it will end I know not. The mountains are still covered with snow, and such tempestuous weather did I never witness.

The political wonders have increased since the suspension of our correspondence so much, that we are all tired of wondering at them ; but this new discovery of a nest of Christians in Travancore must be considered as curious by everybody who reads of it. Tell me the price of Buchanan's book and its character ; I

see nothing but extracts, and those imperfect ones ; and tell me some literary chat, remembering our distance from all possibility of adding a new idea to our stock, except by the voluntary subscriptions and contributions (to use an hospital phrase) of the nobility, gentry, and others. Hospital phrases, indeed, best suit the dwellers at Brynbella ; but Doctor Johnson — never wrong — was right, *pre-eminently* right in this : That chronic diseases are never cured ; and acute ones, if recovered from, cure themselves. The maxim has been confirmed by my experience every day since to me first pronounced, and I dare say the late unfortunate event in your own family affords it no contradiction.

Has your brother many children left him by his lady, and is he living at Hempstead Court ? He had better get to London, and lose his cares in the crowd.

Dear Mr. Lysons, do write to me, and in the mean time pity me and my poor husband, whose sufferings one should believe, on a cursory view of them, wholly insupportable ; but God gives the courage, with the necessity of exerting it.

Adieu, and believe me, ever faithfully yours,

H. L. PIOZZI.

I hear all good of M s. Siddons.

To Samuel Lysons, Esq.

Brynbella, 22d Aug. 1813.

Mrs. PIOZZI presents her most respectful compliments to her old friend Mr. Lysons, as Governor of the British Institution, with an earnest request that he will protect her portraits from being copied, as she was strictly promised before she could consent to lend them. It would break *her* heart, and ruin the value of the pictures to posterity, and now some artist living at No. 50 Rathbone Place, who spells his name so that she cannot read it, unless 't is Joseph, writes to her, begging he may copy the portrait of Doctor Johnson, when she was hoping all the four were by this time restored to their places at old Streatham Park. Mrs. Piozzi wishes Mr. Lysons joy of his brother's marriage, but hopes he himself is not now at Hemstead Hall, as she knows not where to apply.

To Samuel Lysons, Esq.

Brynbella, 17 Feb. 1814.

DEAR MR. LYSONS,—I was desired by some disputants to obtain correct information, and felt immediately that I could be *sure* of it from none but yourself. The question is, What authority can be produced for an account given in some public print of a frost on the River Thames, equal, or nearly equal to this last, in the second or third centuries? Do me the very great kindness to let me know; and *where* you read the fact, whether in Holinshed, Stowe, Speed, or Strype's Annals, and from what record the incident is taken, it having been averred that no records could then have been kept. I mean in 260 or 270 A. D.

Having now discharged my commission, I take the opportunity, though *late*, of wishing you and your brother a happy new year, and full enjoyment of the felicities which people seem in such strong expectation of. Your living world is so remote from *us here*, and the intelligence so limited, that I know absolutely nothing of what is going forward. My correspondents always begin their letters with, You have *heard so much* of, &c., &c., that I am precluded hearing *at all*. Come now, do send me a kind letter, and tell me if Madame D'Arblaye gets £ 3,000 for her book or no;* and if Lord Byron is to be called over about some verses† he has written, as the papers hint. And tell me how the peacemakers will accommodate the Pope, and the little King of Rome too; and the Emperor of Germany beside, whose second title was King of the Romans; and how all this and ten times more is to be settled, before St. David's day. Wonders! wonders! Why Katterfelto and his cat never pretended to *such* impossibilities. What says your brother to *these* days? He used to feel amazed at the occurrences of twenty-one years ago; but if everything we saw so tumbled about *then* can be so easily and swiftly arranged *now*, much of our horror and surprise might have been saved.

The fire at the Custom House must have been very dreadful;

* "The Wanderer, or Female Difficulties," published in 1814.

† The verses beginning:—

"Weep, daughter of a royal line."

I hope you suffered nothing but sorrow for the general loss. Devonshire Square is a place the situation of which is unknown to me, but I have friends there who I should grieve for, if they came to any harm.

Adieu, dear Mr. Lysons: if I *live*, which no other old goose does I think through this winter, we shall meet at old Streatham Park, and I shall once more tell you truly, and tell you *personally*, how faithfully

I am yours,

H. L. PIOZZI.

MISS WYNN'S COMMONPLACE BOOK.

THE following extracts from some of Mrs. Piozzi's letters to a Welsh neighbor, are copied from Miss Williams Wynn's Commonplace book : —

1797. — 'Tis really not unworthy observation, how the vital part of every country has been struck at during the last ten years. Loyalty and love of their *Grand Monarque* was a characteristic of Parisian manners. *Their sovereign has been executed.* Religion and the fine arts comforted the Italians for loss of liberty and of conquests. Their ceremonies are now insulted, their models of excellence taken forcibly away. Our English John, safe in his wooden walls, counted the treasures of the Bank and feared no ill while ships and money lasted. Our guineas are turned to paper, our fleets mutiny, and our boobies here in London run to crown the dead delegates with flowers, forgetting how we were all terrified when the Thames was blocked up, the trade stopt, and an actual civil war at Sheerness, not twenty miles from the capital.

1799. — Your heart would melt to hear the horrid tales from Italy! Poor Conte di Frow, late Turinese Ambassador, comes now and then to disburthen his heart and vent his sorrows on us; and, lamenting more his King's misfortunes than his own, tells how that hapless Prince knelt on the ground in vain before the unfeeling general of the French forces begging a brother's life, while that commander, lately a low attorney of some country town, showed him humbled to his brother officers, and made the scene a matter of encouragement to France to persist in her resolves against crowned heads. *This was Sardinia's King.* The royal family of Naples suffered little less, &c., &c. Dear Mr. Piozzi's countrymen tell him that the oxen, &c., in the North of Italy have been so put in requisition, that large tracts of land lie waste for want of cultivation, whilst civil war of

opinions among the inhabitants, some holding fast by the old way, and some embracing the new notions brought amongst them by the French, make that once lovely country a theatre of agony, and produce such dearness of provisions, that at Genoa a dog's head was sold for five shillings during the siege, and friends, enemies, soldiers, traders, alike perished more by hunger than by the sword.

1813. — Compliments of the season. It is a very old fashion. Our ancestors used to send mistletoe to each other. The Romans presented dates and dried figs to their friends, and the modern Italians make up elegant boxes of sweetmeats for the same purpose. *We* keep our oaks as clean as we can from all parasitical plants. We leave the sugar plums for children, and send empty wishes of a merry Christmas and a happy New Year, — even that good custom is going out apace. Well, Ovid's line to Germanicus was the prettiest: —

“ Dii tibi dent annos, à te nam cætera sumes.”

Buonaparte doubtless thought such a speech would suit him some months ago, but he must renounce all hope of being *Germanicus*.

1814. — Your partiality will encourage me to a long chat with you concerning the atmospheric stones which have attracted much of my attention. I do believe that Diana of the Ephesians was no other than one of these, and it was thought, you know, that she fell down from Jupiter, but I have heard a Camb-man maintain that it was possible that the *moon* might produce them, — an idea best befitting to a *lunatic*. Dr. Milner's joke on such immechanical notions is the very best I know, — the ready furnished house. They must, I think, go *up* before they fall down, and certainly there are more volcanoes at work than we are watching, which fill the air with substances of an attractive kind, which, for the most part, assume conical shapes, as Nature when alone appears particularly to delight in. The Dea Pessinuntia, or Cybele of classic mythology, was, I fancy, a mere meteoric composition. They washed her with much silly reverence, you remember, and Heliogabalus's black stone, which he drove into

Rome with four white horses, was nothing better, only the form happened to be perhaps a more regular and perfect cone. He was a Syrian, you know, and this, dropping from heaven as they believed, served excellently to represent their Bel, or Baal, or lost Thammuz, the *Sun*, in short, of which divinity he was *priest*, as a pyreum of aspiring flame.

Let me hope that you will not pursue geology till it leads you into doubts destructive of all comfort in this world, and all happiness in the next. I am not afraid of *Gibbon*. Whoever has a true taste of Cicero's sweetness and Virgil's majesty, will not take *his* modern terseness of expression or neatness of finish, so completely French, for perfection. With regard to our own nobility and people of fashion getting into these horrid scrapes of swindling and stock-jobbing,* and the Lord knows what, — they fright *me* to read them. We need no longer say with Captain Macheath : —

“ I wonder we ha'n't better company
Upon Tyburn tree.”

The executive Power should really address them now in the official phrase of

My Lords and Gentlemen !

Meanwhile Alexander deserved much of the bustle we made about him. When a child, it seems, his grandmother, the great autocratix Catherine, took an English boy out of a merchant's counting-house at Petersburg, and put him about the young Czar as a playfellow, and to teach him our language. When she had done with him he was sent off of course, and Alexander confessed that his companion was forgotten. One day, however, in the crowds of London, the Emperor recognized a face that he knew, and made the man come up and say in what way he was *now*, and how he could be served ; after which interview no time was lost, till the Prince Regent had not promised only, but actually provided, this old companion of his new friend with a place in the Treasury of £ 500 a year. Such actions are like those related in novels, and acted on the stage.

* This evidently alludes to the fraud for which Lord Dundonald was unjustly punished.

I refused every invitation for the shows in the Park, and saw the red glare over London so plainly from my own gate, that every moment added to my rejoicing that I was no nearer the crush and the crowd when so many *unnamed* human creatures perished. Miles Peter Andrews, the rich and gay, sent out two hundred cards of invitation to see the festivities from his windows, verandah, &c., but Miles Peter Andrews (his friends say) *went off* before the fireworks; so his heir removed the body and received company *himself*. You and I have read of a golden age, a silver, and an iron age: is not *that* we live in, the marble age? so smooth, so cold, so polished.

Meantime 't is really curious to hear the different opinions of those who live at the Fountain Head of information. London at this moment exhibits bills stuck up on every post, with Murder in large letters on it, soliciting the apprehension of a felon who has killed his sweetheart, and the lawyers all declare that the annals of Newgate are *disgraced* (comical enough) by the proceedings of the common people these last three years. Per contra, as shopkeepers would express it, you may see the *good* people (I visit many of those who style themselves the *Evangelicals*) congratulating me and each other on the diffusion of religious knowledge and consequent virtuous behavior. Jews, say they, are converting, slaves releasing, and heathen nations obtaining instruction by means of missionaries warm in the cause of piety, and useful in researches for bettering the general condition of mankind. Preachers, no longer supine, *vie* with each other in eloquent persuasion of their hearers. Who, twenty or thirty years ago, would have run after any one of those who now adorn our pulpits? and are, as far as I can observe, very coolly listened to. Such is my survey of London in 1814.

1817. — The improvements in London amused me very much, and such a glare is cast by the gas-lights, I knew not where I was after sunset. Old Father Thames, adorned by four beautiful bridges, will hardly remember what a poor figure he made eighty years ago, I suppose, when gay folks went to Vauxhall in barges,* an attendant barge carrying a capital band of music

* "One evening, at Mrs. Dooley's, when the party had been talking of the glories of Waterloo bridge, then just opened, a gentleman turned to the lady of

playing Handel's water music — as it has never been played since.

I saw Mr. Wanzey yesterday evening. His account of the procession at Rome, consisting of Christian slaves liberated by Lord Exmouth, was very Interesting.* They walked up the long street, Strada del Popolo, in uniform, and up to St. Peter's Church, attended by all the priesthood singing Litanies, Thanksgivings, &c.; then depositing their stands at the foot of the altar, prostrated themselves before the cross, and returned blessing the English, and crying, as soon as they had passed the church doors, "Vivan i bravi Inglesi! Viva la santa religione," &c.

We are *party* mad here. I do not mean politically so, but the people run to numberless *parties* of a night. No illness or affliction keeps them out of a crowd. A lady at my next door almost had her party on Sunday night, and her husband invited a large company to dinner on the Tuesday following. "Nay," said Dr. Gibbs, "I doubt whether Mrs. — will *live* beyond Tuesday. She is very ill indeed." At three o'clock the husband sent to put off his company, and at eight o'clock she died. He sent his cards out that day fortnight, and had his party again. So runs our world away. The men play at macko and lose their thousands all morning; one gentleman was seen to pay seven guineas for the cards he had used in four hours only.

1818. — Mrs. Lutwych will have the loss not only of a good husband and certain friend, but she will lose her greatest admirer too, which few people could boast of in conjugal life, besides herself and me. Alas! alas! but we must lose or be lost. Her death would have broken his heart. The most painful sight of all is a sick baby, for there is such a vegetating power, such a disposition in the habit to drive that death away which grown people often seem half to invite, that it shocks one; and I hoped poor Angelo would have been the staff of my age.

the house and said, 'You and I, Mrs. Doyley, remember the time when London had but one bridge.' Miss Grimston was present." — *Note by Miss W. Wynn.*

* "It is very strange that the vulgar mistake of writing adjectives with capital letters occurs frequently in these letters. I have copied some of her oddly affected orthography. She is always *set o'laughing*. Through a long negotiation she speaks always of the Piano *e* forte which they are buying for Boddylwyddan." — *Note by Miss W. Wynn.* Was it a vulgar mistake at the time?

You can scarce think how low-spirited all these things make me. I am glad the sea is at hand to wash care away. This weather is melancholy, and so is all one hears, — of riots and conspiracies, and people that call aloud for murderers, as the Jews did for Barabbas. The trifling spasms which assailed me this morning will do very little indeed, — nothing, I trust, towards releasing me from this busy world, described by many as daily improving. P. S. You wonder at my saying the people call aloud for murderers, but my paper says there were placards distributed in Court while the trials went forward, saying, We want a Bellingham.

1819. — Llewenny Hall pulled down too! and its forests *Alta cadit quercus*; but schools are made of the bricks, and *Teachery*, as I call it in a word of my own inventing, goes on at a famous rate; yet one does not remember it is ever said in the Old or New Testament, "If you *study* My ways, and *learn* My commandments;" but "if you *walk* in My ways, and *observe* My commandments *to do them*," which was surely never so little practised as now. Well, the work of reformation runs forward apace. Female associations are forming every day and everywhere. They come into your kitchens, instruct your servants, tell them how their masters and ladies run to perdition, give them books against tyranny, and tell them they are all slaves.

Your vraie amie octogenaire,

H. L. P.

1820. — I certainly feel sorry for his death; and if I do *not* feel *alarmed*, who am three or four years older, it is because even the grim Lion Death may be rendered familiar by stroking, and never suffering him long out of sight. Will you hear the story of my *present* neighbor? Zenobia Stevens, of a good family not far off, had a lease of ninety-nine years under the Duke of Bolton, and *lived it out*. When she went herself and gave it up, her kind landlord begged her to keep the house during her life, and offering her a glass of wine, "*One*, if your Grace pleases," was her prudent reply, "but as I am to ride twelve miles on a young colt these short evenings, I am afraid of being giddy-headed."

MISCELLANEOUS LETTERS.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, 17th January, 1815.

ACCEPT a thousand compliments; I found the pasquinade after a long search as it was given me on the inauguration of Buonaparte.

“Romani! vi mostro un bel Quadro,
 Il santo Padre v`a coronar un Ladro;
Un Pio per conservar la Fede
 Lascia la Sede,
Un altro Pio per serbar la Sede
 Lascia la Fede.”

Romans! behold a picture new,
 The Holy Father crowns a thief;
 Our group exhibits to your view
 Wonders which far exceed belief.

Pius the Sixth his seat could leave
 To save alive our Christian faith;
 His successor that seat to save,
 Abandoned *her* to certain death.

H. L. P.

The sense is kept, and the point blunted in the translation, but so it is in all translations.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, April 10, 1815.

I RETURN your paper, dear Sir, and thank you for the additional conviction it has given me, that argument and eloquence can be found in Free States only, — decision and promptitude in Despotie Governments alone. While we are talking, they will *act* however, and our pelf will put the puppets in motion.

Do you remember the French Fable of Dragon à plusieurs Testes, and Dragon a plusieurs Queues? I will look for it. Meanwhile I wish Buonaparte was pulled down. Too long he has made the world his pedestal, mankind the gazers, the sole figure, he!

Mrs. Dimond is just come in, and invites me to her box to see Mr. Betty.

The Star containing Lord Liverpool's and Castlereagh's speeches on the Prince's message.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, 10th April, 1815.

MY DEAR SIR, — This is a copy of the memorandum I took when the Bishop of Killala (Stock) showed me the fact in Mez-ray's History of France.

"When Hugh Capet was first set in the seat of power, he consulted an astrologer, who told him his descendants would *scarcely* wear the crown above 800 years. 'Will it' (says the King), 'make any difference to the dynasty, if I consent, not to be crowned at all?' 'O yes!' was the reply. 'They will then sit at least 806 years.'" and so they *did*; for if you add 806 to the year 987 when Hugh Capet was inaugurated, it gives you the year 1793 when his descendant Louis XVII. was murdered in prison. Les Horoscopes étoient fort à la mode en ces Tems là. The bishop said it was 816 I remember, and I took the memorandum in haste: if *it was really so*, their time was not expired till two years ago. 'Tis an odd circumstance at any rate: *an odder still*, that you should prefer my version of Adrian's lines, to those of better poets.

"Animula vagula, blandula,
Hospes comesque corporis,
Qvæ nunc abibis in loca!
Pallidula, rigida, nudula,
Nec ut soles dabis joca."

Gentle soul! a moment stay,
Whither wouldst thou wing thy way?

Cheer once more thy house of clay,
 Once more prattle and be gay ;
 See, thy fluttering pinions play ;
 Gentle soul ! a moment stay.*

The conversation we had that *serious* evening last week on the most serious of all subjects, put the verses in my head which you will read over leaf, with your accustomed partiality to, Dear Sir,

Your very much obliged,

H. L. P.

I had some of the lines lying unremembered in my mind ever since the year 1809, but I believe never written out.

Heart ! where heaved my earliest sigh,
 First to live, and last to die ;
 Fortress of receding life,
 Why maintain this useless strife ?
 Weary of their long delay,
 Time and Death demand their prey ;
 Worne with cares, and wearied, thou ;
 Willingly their claim allow :
 Soon shall Time and Death destroyed
 Drop in th' illimitable void,
 Whilst thou thy petty powers shalt ply,
 An atom of eternity.
 For when the trumpet's lofty sound
 Shall echo through the vast profound ;
 When, with revivifying heat,
 All nature's numerous pulses beat,
 Touched by the Master's hand ; shall come
 Thy forgotten pendulum ;
 No longer feeble, cold, and slow ;
 Retarded still by grief or woe ;
 But firm to mark th' unfinished hour,
 That shall all grief and woe devour.

* Thus translated by Pope :—

“ O fleeting spirit, wandering fire,
 That long has warmed my tender breast,
 Wilt thou no more my frame inspire ?
 No more a pleasing cheerful guest ?
 Whither, ah ! whither art thou flying,
 To what dark, undiscovered shore ?
 Thou seem'st all trembling, shivering, dying,
 And wit and humor are no more.”

To Miss Fellowes.

Monday Night, 24 April, 1815.

MY DEAR MISS FELLOWES, — I send you the strangest thing I ever saw ; an adaptation of the mystical beast described in the thirteenth chapter of St. John's Apocalypse, to the name of Napoleon Buonaparte, in Spanish. It has been done in England various times, and in various manners ; but that it should be done as it *is here* in a country of bigoted Romanists, is indeed surprising. If you send it to Sir James, send it very carefully, for it cannot be got again, and he alone deserves it ; perhaps 't is better, keep it for him. My letter contains nothing but some verses he liked when he heard them read last night : I send it open that you may read the lines if you please, and say you like them too. Farewell ! If I find I *can* go to Sidmouth this year, it must be for the two months, September and October ; and I must be here again to begin November. What folly and madness, at my age, to be talking of pleasure I am to receive six months hence !! But I *must* talk what the Spaniards call *disparates* while

H. L. P.

A FABLE FOR APRIL, 1815.

A modern traveller, they say,
 Crossing the wilds of Africa,
 Saw a strange serpent at a distance,
 Moving majestically slow :
 With fifty heads at least in show,
 Not placed together in a row,
 As if to yield assistance ;
 But here and there, and up and down,
 Some with and some without a crown,
 Foaming with rage and grinning with vexation
 Against a dragon which behind a brake
 Waited without much fear the attack,
 And swelled with indignation.
 His lofty head disdained the ground,
 His neck was long and pliant ;
 Could stretch to earth's remotest bound,
 Or lick the scraps that lie on 't.

Of ugly tails a tortuous train
 Still twisted in his rear ;
 But whilst to follow they were fain,
 He viewed their motions with disdain,
 In that alone sincere.
 To watch these mighty monsters greeting
 Our traveller climbed a lofty tree ;
 Where safe and clearly he could see
 All that befell their meeting.
 But whilst the various heads combined,
 From every hedge resistance find ;
 Till hope's grown fat and anger cooling
 Each his companion ridiculing,
 The sly insinuating snake
 Slipt his long body through the brake.
 Defied his followers to find him,
 And tucked his servile tails behind him.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Blake's Hotel, Monday, July 31st, 1815.

Mr dear Sir James Fellowes's friendly heart will feel pleased that the spasms he drove away returned no more ; altho' you were really scarce out of the street before I received a cold, short note from Mr. Merrik Hoare, who married one of the sisters, to say that Lord Keith, who married the other, wished to decline purchasing : so here I am no whit nearer disposing of Streatham Park than when I sat still in Bath. Money spent and nothing done : but bills thronging in every hour. Mr Ward, the solicitor, has sent his demand of £ 116 18s. 3d. I think, for expenses concerning Salusbury's marriage. I call that the *felicity* bill : those which produce nothing but infelicity, all refer to Streatham of course. But you ran away without your epigram translated so much apropos : —

“Créanciers ! maudite canaille,
 Commissaire, huissiers et recors ;
 Vous aurez bien le diable au corps
 Si vous emportez la muraille.”

Creditors ! ye cursed crew,
 Bailiffs, blackguards, not a few :
 Look well around, for here 's my all :
 You 've left me nothing but this wall,
 And sure to give each dev'l his due,
 This wall 's too strong for them or you.

I must make the most of my house now they have left it on my hands, must I not? *may* I not? and, like my countrymen at Waterloo, sell my *life* as dear as I can. O terque quaterque beati ! those who fell at the battle of St. Jean, when compared to the miseries of Cadiz and Xeres ; and O, happy Sir James Fellowes ! whose book, well disseminated, will save us from these horrors, or from an accumulation of them ; when the Cambridge fever shall break out again among the Lincolnshire fens, if we have unfavorable seasons. The best years of *my* temporal existence — I don't mean the happiest ; but the best for powers of improvement, observation, &c. — were past in what is now Park Street, Southwark, but then Deadman's Place ; so called because of the pest-houses which were established there in the Great Plague of London. From clerks, and *blackguards not a few*, I learned there that Long Lane, Kent Street, and one other place of which the name has slipt my memory, were exempt from infection during the whole time of general sickness, and that their safety was imputed to its being the residence of tanners. I am, however, now convinced from your book, that it was seclusion, not *tan*, that preserved them. And do not, dear Sir, despise your sibyl's prediction : for that God's judgments are abroad, it is in vain to deny ; and though France will support the heaviest weight of them till her phial is run out ; our proximity, and fond inclination to connect with her, may, and naturally *will* produce direful effects in many ways upon the morals, the purses, and the health of Great Britain.

Do you observe that there is already a pretender started to the Bourbon throne? You cannot (as I can) recollect in the very early days of the Revolution, that Abbé Sieyes declared he had saved the *real Dauphin* from Robertspierre, and substituted another baby of equal age to endure the fury of the homicides. Some of us believed the tale, and some, the greater number,

laughed at those who *did* believe it. But an intelligent Italian, since dead, assured me that the last Pope, Braschi, believed it; and marked the youth, in consequence of that belief, with a Fleur-de-Lys upon his leg. Whether the young man described in the newspaper as seizing the Duchess d'Angoulesme is that person or another, or whether some fellow under the influence of national insanity imagines himself the Dauphin, he is likely enough to disturb them and divide their friends. Such times by the violence of fermentation produce extraordinary virtues; but your incomparable Don Diego Alvarez de la Fuente would never have had his excellence of character properly appreciated had you not been the man to hand his fame down to posterity. *Æneas* would have been forgotten but for *Virgil*.

I am not yet aware that any suspicion of promoting contagion during the fearful moments you describe lighted on the Jews: the propensity they show to deal in old clothes makes it very likely that they should now and then propagate infectious diseases among their Christian persecutors, but I hope those days are coming fast to an end; when France has been disposed of, *their turn will come*. You will find a kind word or two for them in the first chapter of my second volume (of "*Retrospection*"), but the last chapter in the first volume is my favorite, and should be read before the short dissertation on the Hebrews for twenty reasons. I hope you like my preface, and find it *modest enough*, tho' the critics had no mercy on my *sauciness*.

Well! now the rest of this letter shall be like other people's letters, and say how hot the streets are, and how disagreeable London is in the summer months; and how sincerely happy I should have been to pass the next six or seven weeks at Sidmouth, but that —— O, such speeches are *not* like other people's letters at all: but that —— I have not (with an income of £ 2,000 a year) £ 5 to spend on myself, so encumbered am I with debts and taxes. Leak says he must pay £ 40 Property Tax, now, this minute. He is a good creature, and will be a bitter loss to his poor mistress, whenever we part; although the keeping him, and his wife, and his child, is dreadful, is it not? Since, however, in mental as in bodily plagues, despondency brings on ruin faster than it would come of itself: —

"What yet remains? but well what's left to use,
And keep good-humor still, whate'er we lose."

Give my best love to dear Miss Fellowes, compliments to Mrs. Dorset, if with you, and true regards to your venerable and happy parents, beseeching them all to remember that they have a true servant in, Dear Sir, your infinitely obliged,

H. L. P.

The battle with Anderdon will be fought to-morrow. I make sure of losing the *field*; my generals are unskilful. Direct Mrs. Piozzi, Bath.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Monday Morning, Blake's Hotel,
7th Aug. 1815.

MY DEAR SIR JAMES FELLOWES, — When in the library at Streatham Park yesterday, I just looked into an old book of my writing, now completely out of print, and found these long-forgotten lines. The date 1792.

Shall impious France, though frantic grown,
Drag her pale victims from the throne.

Shall royal blood be spilt:
Yet think neglectful Heaven will spare,
And by conniving seem to share
In such gigantic guilt?

No, tardy-footed vengeance stalks,
Round her depopulated walks,
Waiting the fateful hour;
When human skill no more can save,
But hot contagion fills the grave,
And famine bids devour.

Rise, warriors, rise! with hostile sway
Accelerate that dreadful day,
Revenge the royal cause:
Exerting *well-united* force,
Tear all decrees that would divorce
True liberty from laws.

Is it not very odd I should so predict what is sure enough likely

now to befall *them*, and yet never predict what has befallen myself! But I do not even now repent my journey. The offer to my daughters was not only made, but in person *repeated*; so my conscience is clear of blame if we sell, — there are, however, those who think nothing but an acre of land will in two or three years be worth a guinea.

The funds do fall so strangely, and so fast. Should these explainers of the prophecies prove the wise men we take them for, and should the call of the Jews be at hand, — *their* taking out such monstrous sums would break us down at once; but the Turkish empire must give way before that hour approaches; and rapidly as the wheel runs down the hill, increasing in velocity every circle it makes, I can't believe that things are coming so very forward, but that poor H. L. P. may, by the mercy of God, escape those scenes of turbulence and confusion.

Your book,* however, helps to alarm me. I had no notion that such pestilence had been so near, and you can have but little notion how little we were impressed by newspaper accounts of what you yourself not only witnessed, but endured. From all future ills that Heaven may protect *you*, is the sincere wish and prayer of yours and your charming family's

Truly obliged,

H. L. PROZZI.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, August 24th, 1815.

I COULD not recollect poor dear Garrick's verses yesterday, when we were talking on the subject; although *they* were made in the library at Streatham Park, and, by Johnson's approbation and consent, substituted instead of Murphy's, which he thought pedantic.

“Ye fair married dames who so often deplore
That a lover once blest is a lover no more,
Attend to my counsel, nor blush to be taught
That prudence must cherish what beauty has caught.

* “Reports of the Pestilential Disorder of Andalusia, &c., &c.; with a Detailed Account of the Epidemic in Gibraltar, in 1804, &c., &c.” London. 1815.

" Use the man whom you wed like your fav'rite guitar :
 Though there 's music in both, they are both apt to jar ;
 How tuneful and soft from a delicate touch,
 Not handled too roughly, nor played on too much.*

" The sparrow and linnet will feed from your hand,
 Grow tame by caressing, and come at command ;
 Exert with your husbands the same happy skill,
 For hearts, like your birds, may be tamed to your will.

" Be gay and good-humored, complying and kind,
 Turn the chief of your care from your face to your mind,
 Attractions so pleasing resistless will prove,
 And Hymen shall rivet the fetters of Love."

Murphy's song : —

" Attend all ye fair, and I'll tell ye the art
 To bind every fancy with ease in your chains,
 To hold in soft fetters the conjugal heart,
 And banish from Hymen his doubts and his pains.

" When Juno accepted the cestus of Love,
 At first she was handsome, she charming became ;
 It taught her with skill the soft passions to move,
 To kindle at once, and to keep up the flame.

" Thence flows the gay chat more than reason that charms,
 The eloquent blush that can beauty improve,
 The fond sigh, the sweet look, the soft touch that alarms ;
 With the tender disdain, that renewal of love.

" Ye fair ! take the cestus, and trust to its power,
 The mind unaccomplished, mere features are vain ;
 When wit and good-humor enliven each hour,
 The Loves, Joys, and Graces will walk in your train."

* " The soul of music slumbers in the shell,
 Till waked and kindled by the master's spell ;
 And feeling hearts, touch them but rightly, pour
 A thousand melodies unheard before."

ROGERS.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Monday, 28 August, 1815.

RETROSPECTION, too much crowded with figures; anticipation, in *every* sense a *blank*! and thus it is, Dear Sir, that the world runs away. Mrs. *Flint* and *Dun* (where you bought the bitter hoarhound), *hard* as one of her names, and dreadful as the other, told me our lost fortune on Saturday night; I send it you, enclosed to Miss Fellowes, who will accompany it with pleasanter tydings, I hope. Do the friends, for whom you are sacrificing health, make you large compensation by trying to be happy themselves? I hope they do. If *more* inducements are wanting, they will surely think on *that*.

I have been plagued with a gumboil, a mouth abscess. Punishment on the peccant part for all that rattling nonsense it poured out on Fryday morning, when you met Miss Williams here; but we had been talking gravely before, and my mother used to repeat a Spanish refrain, which *you* know, I dare say, but I do not, expressing: from a companion that knows but one book, and can relate but one story, Good Lord deliver me; and sure enough, monotony will always tire, whether the talk be of mutton or of metaphysics.

“One charm displayed, another strike our view,
In quick variety forever new,”

as some among our Streatham wits used to say, was *her* forte.

Well! but Leak thinks, I see, that necessity will compel me to dispose forever of *that* place, and Lady Williams invites me strongly to quit *every* place; and purchase a beautiful cottage, near my own native sea, with sublime mountain scenery, and good convenience for bathing, twenty or thirty miles from Brynbella (where, by the way, there is a baby born), and two or three hundred miles from London or from Bath. The place is to be hired, or sold with its faery furniture, and you would laugh to see little Bessy Jones's fear lest I should accept the offer, and as *she* says, bury myself completely alive. She knows well enough what North Wales is in winter.

Shall I try the book of names first, and without further care

concerning money, after the debts are paid, venture on No. 8 Gay Street? I should like that better. This East Indian war, however, will keep the Property tax on most certainly, perhaps increase it, and that will affect all our purses.

The Cambrian heiress passed an hour here this morning. She is really a very rational girl, and her father says Cobbett's last performance is beyond all measure inflammatory.

We shall surely have a *storm* literal or figurative, and the first would do least harm; but here's the bit of paper quite exhausted, without a word of the portrait. My letters give the truest portrait after all, and this is a *miniature* of

Dear Sir James Fellowes's

exceedingly obliged servant,

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, Wednesday, 27th September, 1815.

WHY Dear Sir James Fellowes! Peter the Cruel was surely *your* ancestor instead of *mine*. After the thousand kindnesses of you and your charming family, *hombres y hembras*, had heaped on your ever obliged H. L. P., to run out of the town so, and never call to say farewell. Ah! never mind; I shall pursue you with letters, and they shall be more serious than you count on. I took your Spanish Bible *myself* to Linton's (the man in Hetling Court), on Monday morning; and thither the Wraxall shall follow, when I have finished cramming it with literary gossip. Your name on the first page secures it for the present.

Now do not wrong me by suspicion of low spirits. All the absurdity consists in making you an offer of such trifling remembrances; but with regard to *my life*, which has already past the portion of time allotted to our species, forgetfulness of danger would be fatuity, not courage. You would not think highly of a soldier, who, hearing the enemy's trumpet though at a distance, should compose himself to take another nap; but what would *he* deserve, who should be found sleeping on an attack?

I have lived to witness very great wonders, and am told that Bramah, the great mechanic, is in expectation of perfecting the

guidance of an air balloon, so as to exhibit in an almost miraculous manner upon Westminster Bridge next Spring. I saw one of the first — the *very* first, Mongolfier, I believe — go up from the Luxembourg Gardens at Paris; and in about an hour after, expressing my anxiety whither Pilâtre de Rosier and his friend Charles were gone, meaning of course to what part of France they would be carried, a grave man made reply: “Je crois, Madame, qu’ils sont allés, ces Messieurs-là, pour voir le lieu où les vents se forment.”

What fellows Frenchmen are! and always have been. I long for your brother’s new account of them, and if I could turn the figures from seventy-four to forty-seven, I would certainly go and see them myself: in a less hazardous vehicle than an air balloon.

Abate Parini made a pretty impromptu on that we saw go up at Paris, and I translated it, here it is: —

“E LA MACCHINA CHE PARLA.

“Eccomi dal Mondo e Meraviglia e Gioco,
Farmi grande in un punto, e lieve io sento,
E col fumo nel grembo ed a piedi il fuoco,
Salgo per aria e mi confido al vento.

“E mentre aprir nuovo cammino io tento,
A l’ uom, cui l’ onda, e cui la terra è poco,
Fra incerti moti e l’ anco dubbio evento,
Alto gridando la natura invoco.

“Oh Madre delle cose! arbitrio prenda
L’ uomo per me de questo aereo regno;
Se cio fia mai che più beato il renda:

“Ma se nuocer poi dee, l’ audace ingegno
Perda l’ opra, e’ l consiglio; e fa ch’ io splenda
D’ una stolta impotenza eterno segno.”

THE MACHINE SPEAKS.

In empty space behold me hurled,
The sport and wonder of the world,
Who eager gaze, whilst I aspire,
Expanded with aerial fire.

And since man's selfish race demands
 More empire than the seas and lands,
 For him my courage mounts the skies,
 Invoking nature as I rise.

Mother of all ! if thus refined
 My flights can benefit mankind,
 Let them by me new realms prepare,
 And take possession of the air.

But if to ills alone I lead,
 Quickly, O quick ! let me recede,
 Or blaze a splendid exhibition,
 A beacon for their mad ambition.

And now after all this prattle, adieu !

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, Tuesday Night, 3d October, 1815.

WITH regard to public matters, I think Maximilian, the witty Emperor of Germany, was not far from right when he said that *he*, like Agamemnon of old, was Rex Regum; the King of France, Rex Asinorum; the King of England, Rex Diabolorum (though he had not heard of the Irish mutineers of *our day*); the King of Spain Rex Hominum. I hope they will verify the appellation and behave like men and gentlemen. Of dear Cervantes' merit, you must know *most*, and those who do so, must *most* value him. I believe there is no writer in Europe as popular, — no, not Shakespear himself, who is justly the idol of his own country, while the Spanish hero is hero of *every* country, — no nation that does not swarm with prints, and resound with stories of Don Quixote, — and 'tis very likely I am quoting my own book when I say so, but there is no remembering the crowded figures clustered together in "Retrospection." We will talk of the name book when I am grown rich; it will do nothing for me till I don't want it, and *that* day I purpose to see on the 25th of next July, if not hindered by Los Hatos, and cramped in my noble exertions. Nine months, is it not, to July? Well! I have carried many a heavy burden for nine months, and why

not a load of debt? 't is a new sort of burden, but Leak writes me word that Gillow's bill has many charges in it that cannot be supported, so if he can heave off a *hundred* weight, things will run better, and 't is only following your example about the vexatious tooth, — bearing and forbearing, and wearing the misery out.

Our theatre is open, and I saw the new opera dancers from Mrs. Dimond's box. La Prima Donna is the smallest creature I ever saw, that was not a dwarf; her husband a Colossus of a fellow, and the waltz they dance together, just the very oddest thing I ever saw in my life. We were talking here one morning, if you recollect, with Miss Williams, of these Baylerinas, and the ideas they intended to excite. The present set excite *no* ideas except of dry admiration for the astonishing difficulties they perform, and some serious fears lest they should break their slender limbs in the performance. Holding out one leg and one arm in a parallel line, is destructive of all grace; and when, after springing up to a prodigious height, they come down on the point of one toe, nothing can exceed our wonder at its possibility, except one's joy that they escape in safety. Music and dancing are no longer what they were, and I grow less pleased with both every hour, —

“ Year chases year, decay pursues decay,
Still drops some joy from with'ring life away.”

But do not let us teize dear Miss Fellowes to write; it only worries *her*, and whilst I am conscious of it, cannot delight *me*. While secure of a friend's affectionate regard, I abhor dunning them for letters; when my heart tells me that their kindness is growing cold, and feels weary of keeping up an uninteresting correspondence, 't is then that silence is a mute that strangles.

I am enchanted to think of your brother and sister's felicity: they are the most amiable and most deserving of happiness that can be found; and how wise they were to discover the value of happiness in time, and fling no more of it away!

We have an old beauty come here to Bath, — you scarce can remember her, — one of the very *very* much admired women, Lady Stanley. Poor thing! she went to France and Italy early

in life, learned *les manières* and *les tournures*, and how gay a thing it was to despise her husband, who was completely even with her, —

“In youth she conquered with so wild a rage
As left her scarce a subject in her age;
For foreign glories, foreign joys, to roam,
No thought of peace or happiness at home.”

Her fortune, however, as an independent heiress, she held fast; and her wit and pleasantry seem but little impaired; but the loss of health sent her here, and she wonders to see mine so good; so indeed do I, but we were no puling family, — my father, both my grandfathers, and three uncles, all died suddenly, which renders me more watchful of course. Never mind; Pope says,

“Act well your part, there all the honor lies.”

“Nos sumus in scenâ quin et mandante magistro
Quisque datas agimus partes; sit longa brevisve,
Fabula, nil refert.”

I hope you will come to Bath soon, and give me some good advice. I *do hope* you will; nobody will be more observant of it, as nobody ever could esteem it more than does dear Sir James Fellowes's ever obliged and faithful

H. L. PROZZI.

You have made all *your* friends *my* friends. Pray tell them what a grateful heart *that is* which they have been so kind to.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, 10th Oct. 1815.

SUCH letters would make *anybody* well. I will implicitly follow the advice of my *incomparable* friend, and I will not advertise Streatham Park till you approve the measure. Alas, dear Sir, my wish is to conciliate, not provoke them. Lord North's maxim, “*Amicitiae sempiternae, inimicitiae placabiles*,”* is the best in the world; and they will perhaps one day tell you that I have always followed it. Meanwhile I will not swear that the cross winds of domestic life have forborne to injure my tackling, and if I can

* Popularly rendered: “Enmities in dust; friendships in marble.”

now get home under jury-masts, how thankful ought I to be! Apropos to *jury-masts*, what can be the meaning of such an awkward word? I have not a dictionary in the room, but I dare say they mean mâts de *durer*. Masts that will just serve and *last* but for a short time. Now, if I am the worse for the musket-shot of this warring world, how reasonable is it to expect that *you* should have suffered, who have been so exposed to its heaviest artillery! Let us never have done rejoicing that you are returned to the bosom of your family, and permitted to enjoy *their* happiness which you have unremittingly preferred to your own.

I was selfish *once*, and *but* once in my life; and though they lost nothing by my second marriage, my friends (as one's relations are popularly called) never could be persuaded to forgive it; was not it always so? Your Spanish Bible, in the eighteenth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, shows us how to obtain pardon by applying to the *right place and person*, not to our *cruel* fellow-servants.

So here is reciprocation of confidence, and a confession no one but your kind self could deserve, or indeed comprehend.

Where the mad warrior fights for fame,
And life beneath him lies;
'Tis love of praise that bears the blame,
And those that blame are wise.

When female levity and youth
Run wild a thousand ways,
Each stander-by, with equal truth,
Arraigns the love of praise.

But praises when by virtue given
To virtue are assigned,
They light like harbingers from Heaven,
And cheer the trembling mind.

'Tis then with pride resembling shame
We bask beneath their rays,
And virtue with an humbler name
Becomes the love of praise.

Adieu then ! and retain for Mil Años y mas your kindness
for poor

H. L. P.

I remember an awkward Irish Miss once, when it was the fashion to give sentimental toasts, making us all look silly, because the men laughed so who loved rough merriment, when, in reply to their request of a sentiment, she made answer : " What we think on most, Sir, and talk on least." Mrs. Hoare and I both would *feel* that to be Streatham Park.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Tuesday Night, 24th Oct. 1815.

No anecdote, nor no verses — no nor even your praises, which so highly I value — can give equal pleasure to the account you send me of your health. May God Almighty long, very long, preserve it for all our sakes, and inspire you with gratitude for its restoration, as he has inspired you with skill to preserve it.

The day was so bright, and at one time so fine, I was impelled to make the rhymes you will read enclosed. Collins promises me the "Travel Book" on Thursday, which I shall correct for you, and make as clean, and as little unworthy of your acceptance as I can.

Doctor Fellowes is certainly right ; I took my account of Katherine's cruelty, from Govani's, whose "Memoirs des Cours d'Italie" I left in Wales. Are these verses in your margin ? they should be there.

" Elle fit oublier, par un esprit sublime,
D'un pouvoir odieux les enormes abus ;
Et sur un trône acquis par le crime,
Elle se maintint par ses vertus."

Her dazzling reign so brightly shone,
Few sought to mark the crimes they courted,
Whilst on her ill-acquired throne
She sat, by virtue's self supported.

The Anecdotes of Doctor Johnson were begun at Milan, where we first heard of his death, and so written on, from milestone

to milestone, till arriving at Leghorn, we shipped them off to England.

Mr. Thrale had always advised me to treasure up some of the valuable pearls that fell from his (Johnson's) lips, in conversation; and Mr. Piozzi was so indignant at the treatment I met with from his executors, that he spirited me up to give my own account of Doctor Johnson, in my own way; and not send to them the detached bits which they required with such assumed superiority and distance of manner, although most of them were intimates of the house till they thought it deserted forever. I think we must not tell your dear father that his friend Bennet Langton was one of them. If we do, he will not say as Dr. Johnson did,

“ Sit anima mea cum Langtono.”

But my marriage had offended them all, beyond hope of pardon.

Now judge my transport, and my husband's, when at Rome we received letters saying the book was bought with such avidity, that Cadell had not one copy left, when the King sent for it at ten o'clock at night, and he was forced to beg one from a friend, to supply his Majesty's impatience, who sat up all night reading it. Samuel Lysons, Esq., Keeper of the Records in the Tower, then a law student in the Temple, made my bargain with the bookseller, from whom, on my return, I received £ 300, a sum unexampled in those days for so small a volume.

And here, my dear Sir, is a truly-told anecdote of yours and your charming family's gratefully attached,

H. L. P.

Pray present them my verses.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Sunday, 15th October, 1815.

No, no; it was Jael that killed Sisera, who was a warrior, not a woman. The termination in *a* does not in Hebrew feminize a name, any more than the termination in *o* renders a name masculine in the Greek. סִיסֵּרָא, Sisera, was the proper name of the general of a hostile army sent to subdue Israel, and reduce them forcibly to acknowledge as *Deity* the very same abominations they are adoring even now, as our friend the general knows, fur-

ther to the eastward. Tabor is still an insulated mount ; it was called Itabyrius by the profane writers ; but *indeed* to be a good Bible scholar is better far, and *will carry further*, than being the best Greek one ; and if the Spanish version does justice to that magnificent piece of lyric poetry — for such it is — which you read in the fifth chapter of Judges, called the Song of Deborah and Barak, you will be enchanted with it. Lowth's praise of it is sublime indeed ; and Kurstness, or Pelicanus as they call him, says boldly, "Now let your Homer or Virgil find a passage equal in eloquence and beauty to the last eight verses of that incomparable ode."

I believe the challenge cannot be answered ; but if you really *do* value my taste in literature and my opinion in the choice of books, assure yourself I would give all Lord Spencer's library for his best Bible ; reflecting, with Locke and Paley, that of *that work* God is the author, Truth is the subject, and its tendency Eternal Life. Should such at length become *your* preference, too, it *might* not, possibly, but it is too presumptuous to say so ; yet it perhaps *might* not be in *this world only*, so soon to be hid from our eyes, — that dear Sir James Fellowes should have cause to recollect with complacency his partial friendship for poor

H. L. PROZZI.

The vulgar menace of I'll be after you with a *susurrare* means, as far as it means anything, I'll follow you up with a writ of *certiorari*,* to call up the *records*, that justice may be done *impartially*.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, 19th Oct. 1815.

THE next best thing to shaking a friend by the *hand* is seeing his *handwriting*. I am happy to read yours, and most earnestly hope you will keep close to the house till better days. The ladies will have sad weather to travel in. General Garslin did me a great deal of honor, and deserved some amusement in payment for his trouble in finding the house.

* She is substantially right. It is a writ for the removal of the proceedings, civil or criminal, from an inferior to a superior jurisdiction.

If it were not for flattery, I should break my heart yet, old bills not counted on coming against me so ; but I don't care, as the children say ; I shall out of my plagues, and out of my prison too, next July.

Meanwhile, dear old Doctor Lort, the Greek professor, was godfather to the gentleman you mention, and his surname went to the bishop at the font as a Christian name. You will find Doctor Lort mentioned under the article Daphne, as I remember.

But I have had a nice dish of flattery dressed to my taste this morning. That grave Mr. Lucas brought his son here, that he might see the *first woman in England* — forsooth. So I am now grown one of the curiosities of Bath, it seems, and *one of the Antiquities*.

This evening a chair will carry me to Mrs. Holroyd's, to meet two other females, whom Richardson taught the town to call old tabbies, attended, says he, by young *grimalkins*. Now that's wrong ; because they are young tabbies, and when grown gray are *gris malkins*, I suppose. Is not this fine nonsense for the first woman ? Prima Donna ! in good time !

If I could detain your man to say one grave serious word, it would express my content that your dear father is arrived to take care of my inestimable friend, Sir James Fellowes, whose health is of such consequence. Mind what he says, and believe me, most sincerely your obliged servant,

H. L. P.

October 27, 1815.

"Mrs. Piozzi," remarks Sir J. Fellowes in a memorandum on this letter, "dined with our family party to-day. Speaking of Hogarth, she mentioned a clever impromptu, addressed to Mr. Tighe, who was intent upon some Greek book when dinner was ready : —

"Then come to dinner, do, my honest Tighe,
And leave thy Greek, and η β π .
eat a bit o' pie."

To Sir James Fellowes.

30 October, 1815.

IF dear Sir James Fellowes still continues under discipline, this anecdote of Hogarth and of his little friend may amuse him. My father and he were very intimate, and he often dined with us. One day when he had done so, my aunt and a groupe of young cousins came in the afternoon, — evenings were earlier things than they are now, and 3 o'clock the common dinner-hour. I had got a then new thing I suppose, which was called Game of the Goose, and felt earnest that we children might be allowed a round table to play at, but was half afraid of my uncle's and my father's grave looks. Hogarth said, good-humoredly, "*I will come, my dears, and play at it with you.*" Our joy was great, and the sport began under my management and direction. The pool rose to five shillings, a fortune to us monkeys, and when I won it I capered with delight.

But the next time we went to Leicester Fields, Mr. Hogarth was painting, and bid me sit to him; "*And now look here,*" said he, "*I am doing this for you. You are not fourteen years old yet, I think, but you will be twenty-four, and this portrait will then be like you. 'Tis the lady's last stake; see how she hesitates between her money and her honor. Take you care; I see an ardor for play in your eyes and in your heart; don't indulge it. I shall give you this picture as a warning, because I love you now, you are so good a girl.*" In a fortnight's time after that visit we went out of town. He died somewhat suddenly, I believe, and I never saw my poor portrait again; till, going to Fonthill many, many years afterward, I met it there, and Mr. Piozzi observed the likeness when I was showing him the fine house, then deserted by Mr. Beckford. The summer before last it was exhibited in Pall Mall as the property of Lord Charlemont. I asked Mrs. Hoare, who was admiring it, if she ever saw any person it resembled. She said no, unless it might once have been like me, and we turned away to look at something else.

With regard to play, I have been always particular in avoiding it, so that I scarce know whether the inclination ever sub-

sisted or not. The scene he drew will certainly remind any one of poor H. L. P., and no one but yourself knows the story.

But I must tell you how well your dear father is, and how heartily I made him laugh this morning at one of my comical stories, true as the day, which I heard a silly lady in my own country two or three years ago ask me quite suddenly before a room full of company, to tell her; "for," says she, "you know Mrs. Piozzi does understand everything; what bone her son broke at the battle of Talavera." This was *too* hard a question; but the lady went on: "No, no," continued she, "not hard to Mrs. Piozzi. Louisa, you lost the letter very provokingly which had the fine word in it; and now you laugh, you ill-natured thing, because I can't recollect it, but Mrs. Piozzi will know in a minute." Turning to me: "It was one of your fine words, I say, and very like fable-book." "I have," said I, "heard that Mr. Morgan's horse fell upon him, and perhaps broke the fibula, or small bone of his master's leg." "There, there!" cries out the lady; "I told you Mrs. Piozzi would know it at once."

To Sir James Fellowes.

Sunday, 26th November, 1815.

WE all remembered you at the Lutwyches last Thursday, where the galanterie of the master of the house was quite the prettiest thing presented on the occasion. With one dying mari-gold these lines:—

"The gift of him whose heart can't vary,
How paradoxical! Behold!
Having no gold to give my Mary,
I here present *this marygold*."

They received my fleurs and fleurettes very obligingly, and shewed my worked fly, finely mounted as a fire-screen. Well! all that is politeness, is it not? a strong polish, over which everything glides and rolls and appears to make no impression, but if you look closely you will discern afterwards a lasting stain. Time's daughters (the days of the year) like the daughters of man, are deceitful; while young and in their papa's house, they flatter and promise the pleasures of next July to one confiding

lover, a prize in the lottery to another; but see them come out, wrinkled and roughened with what each of them calls unforeseen vexations; their votaries turn away, not as they should do, to mansions beyond their control; but looking back, make love to a younger sister, and trust another day.

Yesterday did better; Mrs. Holroyd's party: we were a choice set indeed. But she had unluckily asked talkers to play the part of hearers, while Mrs. Lysons sung, and Mrs. Twiss * read. So one said the selection of songs was a dull one; another thought it was foolish to be listening to "Macbeth" in a room, when we had so lately seen it represented with every additional assistance on a stage. I persuaded her to take up Milton, and try what could be done with the second book; her sister read the fourth book, I remember, at Doctor Whalley's, about five or six years ago, and Sir William Weller Pepys made this impromptu while she was speaking, repeating it the moment she had done: —

"When Siddons reads from Milton's page,
Then sound and sense unite;
Her varying tones our hearts engage
With exquisite delight:
So well those varying tones accord
With his seraphic strain;
We hear, we feel, in every word,
His angels speak again."

To Sir James Fellowes.

1st December, 1815.

THE customary season of good wishes; which, like your Spanish oranges, are in warm hearts a fruit of every season, dear Sir James Fellowes has anticipated, in expressing a kind hope that my next year may prove more happy than the last. Recollect meanwhile that my last year began with making your acquaintance, and I hope ends with having gained your friendship. Will a good house in Gay Street (should I ever live to enjoy it) mark 1816 as agreeably? I say not. Accounts from Streatham Park,

* The wife of Francis Twiss, (author of the "Complete Verbal Index to Shakespeare,") and mother of the late Horace Twiss. She was the sister of Mrs. Siddons, and very like her. She read beautifully, as I well remember, having been domesticated with the family as a private pupil of Mr. Twiss for two years.

however, are neither good nor bad. The place is a mere drag upon my mind, a drain upon my purse ; and no Marquis of Stafford yet appears, nor do I feel as if anything were likely to be done there, good or bad.

The best joke going here, and most like your *hors de combat*, was made on the bustle with which Mr. Parish presented Princess Talleyrand to a large company at his house ; where some wag observed that the lady had gone through many adventures, and now was come to the *parish*.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Now eighteen hundred and fifteen
Will quickly write herself — has been.
For though success was never seen
Brilliant as ours in bright fifteen ;
Old Time will rear his lofty skreen,
To part us from the year fifteen.
If, then, this frail though nice machine
Can last till death of dear fifteen,
Let those few hours that lie between
Throw no disgrace on past fifteen !
Free from reproaches, coarse or keen,
Be sung the dirge of dead fifteen !
While peace extends her olive green
O'er the pale wounds of poor fifteen.
Nor let th' enticing air and mien,
The promised freshness of sixteen,
Lead us to tempt, howe'er serene,
Eternity ! Offended queen.

Vineyards, Wednesday Night,
6 December, 1815.

I HAVE been dining with your dear family, as happily as we *could* dine without our kind absentee. I think you will find the effects of your father's fine Malaga in the above impromptu from
H. L. P.

For mercy's sake burn this stuff ; it seems strange even to myself, after tea.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, Monday Evening,
11 December, 1815.

VERY ill pleased with myself for sending such an empty scrap when my heart was full, but it was because your servant waited at the door for it ; and very ill-disposed to delight in your determination upon the choice of life, as Doctor Johnson calls it in his "Rasselas." I sit down now to write you as long a letter as I like, and fairly send it to the post. My dear Sir James Fellowes confesses that I have spoiled him for the frivolous conversation of beaux and belles ; if I say all I think, I shall disgust you from the project of practising medicine in a thronged metropolis, where those that employ a physician pretend not to know how far his skill is worthy of confidence, and those that reject him have no means of guessing wherein lies his deficiency ; who choose a doctor, as girls choose a husband, because some other head, as empty as their own, was casually filled with a fancy, — that of his being fashionable. Is there any other rudder used in present life but the mode ? Is there any other book read but "Rhoda?"* And is not that admired because it shows everybody what they like best ? — their own faces in the glass. I beg pardon, your brother's little work is well spoken of by everybody ; but Walter Scott has certainly fallen in the plains of Waterloo ; I was always half afraid that Arctic Phœbus would set in a fog.

We had a pretty evening at the Lutwyches, where I repeated your pretty speech and spoiled it from complete nervousness, the word best calculated to disguise ill-humor ; and which induced a strangling or choking at the dinner table, which politeness, however, smoothed down so well that nobody was aware on't but your dear sister, who called aloud for water. Shall I put it in the "Biographical Memoires" that both my husbands lived and died in the persuasion that I should expire suddenly, or by accident ? It is true that they *did* think so, and that I think so too. Let it serve as one among many inducements to live in a state of preparation. Well ! if I die to-morrow, Gillowes's people have

* "Rhoda," a novel, in four volumes, published by Colburn. Her remark on it resembles one made by Madame de Sévigné on the play of *Les Visionnaires*.

now had £1,700 of the £2,380 which their bill came to; and Leak says we may cut the bill down to £2,070 if we could pay it quick, and save the interest; so I sent him £200 now of the January dividends, and must owe *him* £170 instead of owing *them* £380. I don't like the arrangement, though an advantageous one; but I like nothing else better, as in the case of your London practice; apropos to which I will add one good thing,—you will see women to more advantage than in a ball room; attentive to a sick parent, brother, or sister, and you will say:—

“O woman! in our hours of ease
Capricious, coy, and hard to please;
When grief and anguish wring the brow,
A ministering angel thou.”

Those are Walter Scott's lines, and very pretty sure. While you accept my criticism, and quote my “Synonymes,” I will not complain (though but just three years behind your father) of the *tædium vitæ*. By the way, I am engaged to dine at the dear Vineyards on the 14th of February, and you are engaged to be at the Lutwyches on the 15th of this December.

I met your mamma in the street, and said, “Well, Ma'am! Sir James Fellowes has not forgot me, though among so many charmers!” “Forgot *you*!!” replied Mrs. Fellowes, “I would not give a pin for him if he forgot *you*.” So you see I have a friend at court.

Poor old Dr. Harrington is going, and I now wish him gone. When the bright visions painted by the pencil of youth, or those no less dear to us formed by the firmer hand of maturity, on the canvass of human understanding, grow dull, and dirty, and dingey, like those landscapes of Titian done when he was ninety years old, 't is more kind to let them drop quietly in pieces, than sew them coarsely together, and bid for them as a rarity. I wish he would pack up and be gone.

Dr. Holland helped to lower my spirits, too; all my Venetian friends killed or beggared by this vile revolution. How melancholy!

So farewell! and for a short time, dear Sir; come soon and chase the gathering clouds away.

" Mon premier est le premier de son espèce,
 Mon second n'eut un premier jamais :
 Mon tout, je n'aime guère le vous dire."

H. L. P.

But adieu !

Dr. Myddelton had been troubled with cramps and spasms, but shook them off, and used the slipper-bath. When in it one evening he cried, " O, my head ! " and died without another word or groan.

" Nil mihi rescribas, attamen ipse veni."

To Sir James Fellowes.

5 November, 1815.

I SEND my dear Sir James Fellowes the " Synonymes " that he may finish with the best thing I ever wrote ; I send likewise my defence of *his* favorite " Retrospection : " they were very civil to the Synonymy, and there was a fine eulogium on the string of words, calling over the meaning of crush, overwhelm, ruin, in the first volume. I have marked very few passages, but hope you will like many.

I have no other way of showing the regard with which I shall for ever remain,

Your obliged friend,

H. L. P.

How kind you are, and how partial ! and what an unspeakable loss shall I have when you enter on a London life and London practice. Dr. Holland, who writes about the Ionian Islands, is going to London to practice, and exchange the *Cyclades* for the *sick ladies* ; he has been a lion here for three whole days. I caught the *Queue du Lion*, and passed one evening in his company, but a whole menagerie would make me no compensation for exchange of sentiment in friendly converse. O, do make haste to Bath, and let me lament my fate to you personally. Is that being grateful to Heaven, though, when one year's valuable friendship has been granted, at a time when so few years can be expected by poor

H. L. PROZZI.

" Let us leave the best example that we can." I have, how-

ever, much to say to you about the Biographical Memoires, which are really in some degree of forwardness.

Adieu! Going to dine with the Lutwyches, Sunday, 10th December, 1815.

Bath, Wednesday,
13th December, 1815.

My dear Doctor Thackeray's kind partiality followed me so long and so far upon my journey through life, I think he has enough left even now not to be wearying of hearing how I do, and what I do in a situation very new to me indeed, but rendered supportable by the countenance and conversation of pleasant friends and agreeable acquaintance. The accounts I hear from Wales, too, make me very happy and thankful, and convince me that my tenderness was bestowed on worthy creatures who seem to make themselves much beloved in their neighborhood. O how that neighborhood is changed! O how many sighs shall I have to leave on every house as I pass it, if it should please God that I can come down next July, unencumbered by debts, and no longer haunted by vexations which have tormented me for two long years! But you are country gentleman enough to know that a high paling round a park of two miles extent, besides fronting a large house made by my exertions as if wholly new,* and then furnishing it in modern style supremely elegant, though I thought not costly, cannot be done but by enormous expense, and, in fact, surveyors, carpenters, and cabinet-makers have driven poor Hester Lynch Piozzi into a little Bath lodging, where Miss Letitia Barnston found her, two rooms and two maids her whole establishment; a drawing of Brynbella, and by the fair hand of Mrs. Salusbury, her greatest ornament.

Meanwhile our town, like yours, takes turn for the fine dancers or fine actors when they have a week to spare; and as for private talent, there never were so many young people so skilled in music as now. I heard a child of ten years old perform on the forte piano last week like a professor. The winter seems as if it would be a long one, it began early, and many old people sink under the rapid changes. Doctor Harrington, however, kept his

* She is speaking of Streatham.

eighty-ninth birthday awhile ago, and listened with delight to his charming compositions. The last catch and glee are said to be the best he ever produced, and sure he lives a proof that air and exercise are not the preservatives of life which we account them, as he always visited his patients in a chair half a century ago, as he now visits his acquaintance, and always with his mouchoir at his face to keep away every breath of wind; when walking in the abbey with his son-in-law last summer, "Come," said he, "let us choose a spot for my old bones," and recollecting himself suddenly —

"These ancient walls, with many a mouldering bust,
But show how well Bath waters lay the dust."

If you have not heard that impromptu before, you will like it. Adieu, dear Sir! and make my best regards to Mrs. Thackeray, with love to the lasses who were nice babies. Do you remember Selina, she would be Mrs. Piozzi herself? Now write me a kind word, do, and say you will be glad to see me next July, but how unlikely is there should there be anything left of your poor

HESTER LYNCH PIOZZI.

To Sir James Fellowes.

MY DEAR SIR, — Come to Laura Chapel next Sunday, and listen to my favorite preacher, when he winds up the whole year. 'Tis a hackneyed theme, but from him I cannot help expecting somewhat new, at least somewhat particularly impressive. My desire of your happiness must end in steril good wishes, handed down from generation to generation, dirtied and tarnished by too much wear and tear. Is not it melancholy to have fresh feelings, and none but worn-out words to express them in?

To experience every sentiment of the truest and most disinterested friendship, and to say only that I am, dear Sir, your most obliged servant,

H. L. PIOZZI.

Bath, 30th December, 1815.

To Sir James Fellowes.

6th January, 1816.

GOOSEY LINTON is a good goosey, and deserves apple-sauce when apples are dearest. I see no mistakes at all, and if you find any, I will rectify them.

The Travel Book and the anecdotes there will show you perplexities of a new and untoward nature; for though I had witnessed much theological talk, controversy was wholly strange to me; and now dear Sir James Fellowes will see, as he has often *felt*, what a wretched thing the happiest human life would be, were this all: but who, without pain's advice would e'er be good; and who, without death but would be good in vain? The old undertaker's motto, "*Mors janua vitæ*," is after all our best consolation.

That every comfort may attend your staying hither and your going hence, after mil años y mas, is the unceasing wish of your much obliged, &c.,

H. L. P.

My *jour de naissance* is coming round in a few days, now; and as Pope says,

"With added years of life brings nothing new,
But like a sieve lets every blessing through:
Some joy still lost, as each vain year runs o'er,
And all we gain, some sad reflection more.
Is this a birthday? 't is, alas! too clear
'T is but the funeral of the former year."

Yet will I not (like Dr. Johnson) quarrel with my birthday. To have been born into this world is our only claim for some sort of place in a better; and surely to have gained attention and friendship from Doctor Collier in my early days, — the hour of female attention being scarce arrived, and from Sir James Fellowes in my latter scenes, — when that bright hour was over, might well compensate for those long, busy, intermediate acts, even of a more tragic drama than I was engaged in, through a fatiguing past indeed; sometimes very sweetly supported, many times very cruelly thwarted, by my companions on the same stage; and now, if all is to be soon over, *Valete et plaudite*.

H. L. P10ZZI.

Here is a dreadful storm ; the sea runs very high, no doubt. I could not get out to-day.

Ask the young ladies if they can describe to you the color of the wind ; if they can tell you the tint of the storm !

'T is an enigma. Adieu.

11 January, 1816.

(Jour de Naissance, 27th January.)

Tuesday Night, 16th January, 1816.

MY dear Sir James Fellowes will like a long independent letter about a thousand other people and things. When I am one of the family cluster we can think only of you. Yet poor old Dr. Harrington must be thought of ; he will be seen no more. Was it not pretty and affecting that they played his fine sacred music so lately, and by dint of loud and reiterated applause called him forward as he was retiring, to thank him for their entertainment ? He returned, bowed ; went home, sickened, and ! This was a classical conclusion of his life indeed ; like the characters at the end of Terence's plays, who cry *Valete omnes et plaudite* ! But I would wish a less public exit, and say *Vale* ! to my nearest friend, *Voi altri applaudite* to the rest.

Apropos, did you ever read Spencer's long string of verses, every stanza ending with Wife, Children, and Friends ? I can neither find nor recollect them rightly ; but too well does my then hurt mind retain my answer to a lady (one of the Burneys) who quoted a line expressive of contempt for general admiration, going on to this passage, which I *do* remember : —

“ Away with the laurel, o'er *me* wave the willow,
Set up by the hand of wife, children, and friends.”

My reply was “ No ; for,” said I,

“ Should love domestic plant the tree,
Hope still would be defeated,
Children and friends would crowd to see
The neighboring cattle eat it.

“ Deciduous plants will lose their leaves
With winter's provocation,
And ev'ry sigh that sorrow heaves
Will sap the slight foundation.

" Till in a sea of follies tost,
Foes to each fine emotion,
Our drooping willow 's driven and lost
On Life's tempestuous ocean.

" While true to time-worn worth we view
The verdant laurel rising,
Firm-fixed, and of unchangeful hue,
Each wintry blush despising.

" Around the late-reposing head
This faithful foliage hovers,
Points out the merits of the dead,
And many a failing covers.

" And should the berries e'er invite
Some envious, nibbling neighbor,
A blistered tongue succeeds the bite,
And best repays their labor."

Did you believe I could ever have expressed myself with so much bitterness? but if people will break the heart even of an apricot, sweetest and most insipid of all fruits, the kernel will yield a harsh flavor.

Poor Doctor Harrington, like myself, has found the kindness that sweetened his existence always from without doors, never from within.

My cough is no longer a bad one, but the hoarseness does not go off; and when I tried to tell old stories last night to amuse, I found the voice very odious; so Sir James Fellowes is best off now, that has me for a correspondent. Don't you remember, in some of my stuff, how Johnson said if he was married to Lady Cotton, he would live a hundred miles away from her, and make her write to him. "Once a week," added he, "I could bear a letter from the creature, but it is the poorest talker, sure, that ever opened lips."

Well, if you asked the pretty girls to tell you the color of the wind, and explain to you the tint of the storm, they would say the storm rose, I imagine, and the wind blew. We used to spell the color so in very old days.

Meanwhile, the geological maps of what is to be discerned

under ground, are fine things certainly ; but I feel so completely expectant of going to make strata myself, that the science does not much allure me, although I am *deeply* concerned in it at seventy-five years old. Dear me ! 't is a silly thing to try to extract sunbeams from cucumbers, like Swift's projector in "Gulliver's Travels."

Princess Charlotte has at length made her choice, it seems, of Le Prince de Saxe-Coburg, a handsome man, and she thinks so. Without that power of making impression, beauty in either sex is a complete nihility ; find me a better word, and that shall be turned out by her who wishes to keep the best in every sense for you.

Your faithful

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, 17 January, 1816.

I TOLD dear Sir James that his next letter should cost him nothing, and sure nothing can equal the event it tells. But Sévigné's pen alone could describe it ; could excite your wonder so, and produce no disappointment.

A lady, then, well-born, well-looking too, my near neighbor, marries a gentleman, an officer, a general officer. Where, say you is the wonder ? She is thirty-six years old. She marries General Doukin, senior ; his military cloak and old cocked hat have won her. Needs any man despair ? He called her in to dinner the very day his wife, thirty years younger than he, was carried out a corpse. She told her son and daughters that it would be so, and so it will be. The bridegroom in his ninety-first year.

Miss Wroughton is arrived. She says her mother is ninety-seven years old. I bid her be careful of *les espouseurs*, and told her of General Doukin. She says her mother has the full use of her understanding, and is of course out of any such danger.

Among all the afflictions which vex our human frame, the most dreadful (says Dr. Johnson) is the uncertain continuance of reason.

God preserve yours unclouded and serene for at least half a

century more. As no man ever employed it to more benignant purposes, so no man ever merited longer possession of felicity; great as can be wished to her best friend in her best moments by your faithful

H. L. P.

Doctor Harrington kept his wits to the last minute, and laughed when they told him the story I have told you.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, Sunday, 21 Jan. 1816.

MR. GREENFIELD preached a very fine *Oraison funèbre* upon poor old Harrington to-day, and used my very expressions; was not it odd enough! Not odd at all, say you, that Mrs. Piozzi should like his compositions, if that is the case.

But I have something less pleasant, — bills following me from —. Small shot, indeed, but mortifying in the extreme. I told your I was like some famous boxer that was knocked down by a farthing candle artfully slung at his head, while yet bleeding and bruised to death almost, from a victory newly won. Dr. Goldsmith, whose feet “every path of vulgarity trod,” told us once of an ale-house wager. A man betted that he would produce a person who should perform this operation on some well-known hero of the fist; who, not being apprised of the frolic, and panting for breath and refreshment, felt this sudden hit upon his temporal artery, and dropped down, demolished by a farthing candle.*

Now do not you believe me sensible to my own anxieties, careless of yours. I hope you know me better; but a moment’s variety will contribute to amuse your mind and repay you some of the pleasure — no, not pleasure; how can this stuff give any but a momentary recollection — that you have a friend, and that that friend is

H. L. P.

* This story of Goldsmith’s is mentioned by Boswell.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, 25 January, 1816.

I HAVE suffered much from nervous irritation, but your kind father is so good to me. I did not tell him that I apprehended aphthæ, but the lady who was afraid of her own hearth-rug could not be more fanciful than I have been.

“ Strong and more strong her terrors rose,
 Her shadow did the nymph appal;
 She trembled at her own long nose,
 It looked so long against the wall.”

Now for what the newspaper calls miscellaneous articles. Your father bids me drink the Bath water, and I did do so yesterday, and was more alive than and I tried the Bishop of Salisbury's party last night, but made a poor figure, — so hoarse. A mute Piozzi is a miserable thing indeed, but health will mend.

The bishop is very agreeable; and though he is a nobleman now and a courtier, remembers old times and old jokes, and how he and I sat down together on a dirty bench in St. Mark's Place, Venice, to hear a Dominican friar, while harlequin jumped about unheeded on the other side of the square.

Your must see the new book, though the best thing in it is telling how the foreigner comes to an inn at Dover, and finding a member of the Bang-up Club loitering about the yard, cries, “ Here, Ostler, hold my horse.” “ Know your road work better, you” replies the other, and challenges him. Escaped from this misery, he meets a lady going to a party, her head heaped in the fashionable way with flowers. “ Sell me some roses, pretty dear!” cries the new-arrived foreigner, laying hold of them. “ Insulting fellow!” cries the girl; “ I'll have you punished for an assault.” A passer-by relieves him from this difficulty, and they strike up a friendship and go together to the inn. “ Pray, Sir, who have I the honor to be so much obliged to?” says the stranger. “ I, Sir, am captain of the band of pensioners.” The Spaniard looks in his English dictionary (Johnson's) for so hard a word; and finds Pensioner, a man hired

for the destruction of his country. "O, for pity leave me directly," cries he; "I am in company with a chief of banditti. What will become of me? Get out of my apartments."

Well! now I will have done with all this buffooning nonsense, and with the truest regard,

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Saturday, 3 February, 1816.

I HAVE some very curious things at Streatham, more curious than you think for; one pair of frightful old Etruscan jars, for example, given me by a monsignore, Ennio Visconte, a Milanese nobleman, then resident at Rome, and a first-rate connoisseur.

"These," said I, "are indeed antiques." "Antiques!" replies the man; "why they were antiques when in Cicero's cabinet. Antiques! why they were antiques in Romulus's time; they are coeval with the Babylonish captivity." With proper blushes I accepted them, and there they are.

I have a pair of old blue and white porcelain bottles, too, which were brought into my family by an old Salusbury in the year 1400; and my grandmother used to frighten my father from improper matches by holding them in her hand, and protesting she would break them; "for," said she, "they came by the Red Sea before the passage round the Cape of Good Hope was discovered, and do you think they shall ever be possessed by Miss Such-a-one?" When, however, she learned that he had united himself with his cousin Cotton of Combermere's daughter, she said: "Well, then, now I will kiss my old bottles, and keep them for John's eldest child." They are yet in her possession, 1816.

To-morrow I shall break quarantine, go to church (in a chair), and give God thanks for all his mercies.

Your ever obliged and grateful

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, 29 February, 1816.

SUCH a kind letter as your dear father put in my hand this day, and I, bankrupt even in acknowledgment, can only curtsy

and say, Thank you, Sir. In return for your confidence, however, I shall tell you a secret; and that is, that I am engaged to dine at No. 13 on Tuesday next, 5th March, and your mamma says we are to drink sweet wine, I suppose till we see double.

My heart has been so bruised of late; it did promise me to think all of the next world and no more of this; but Doctor Halley said, you know, that in the centre of this globe there was a great spherical magnet pulling and attracting us down to earth; from which pieces, which he calls Terrellæ, broken off from the grand loadstone, but partaking its powers, are scattered up and down in order to hold us fast. Your happiness is one of these Terrellæ to me, and I wish to remain here till I see it completed, for which reason not a word will I utter about provocations, only to say they had nothing to do with the small shot.

My next letter from dear Sir James will be dated Streatham Park. Thus will he

“ Ope the hospitable gate,
Ope for friendship, not for state.
Friends well chosen enter there,
Confidence and truth sincere;
Love, in mutual faith secure,
Transport generous and pure,
Sparkling from the soul within,
Never boasted, always seen.”

Is it not a shame to fancy you have time to read a letter? yet vanity, that vile passion, says you will read it.

And now let me finish with the most serious and solemn wishes for every possible happiness to you and yourself, and yourself's half. I like the expression, 't is sincere and new; new I suppose because it is sincere. So God bless you, my dear and highly-valued friend.

Yours, &c.

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, 1 March, 1816.

ON St. Taffy's day does ——'s little Welsh friend renew her wishes of happiness. The thought of its being so near, and the delightful certainty of your going to my house at Streatham Park

to be happy, puts me in the best good-humor possible. And since —— has written again without insolence or peevishness, I have contented myself, in reply to his inquiries after my health, with saying that my cough is gone, and that I hope he is recovered from his nettle-spring rash, which seems to burst out annually, as I had an odd letter from him in the same style ten or twelve months ago.

We are raving mad here about the property tax. Will it be abolished or no?

General Doukin is married and Mrs. Wroughton dead, characters well known in Bath. They are nearly of an age, but the lady's is the more prudent step, sure, after ninety.

Did Leak show you the bason I was baptized in so many years ago? it is in the china closet next the drawing-room door, with a bit of dirty paper in it which Mr. Piozzi made me write, I think, but am not sure, lest it should be confounded with the other things.

Did you never go to Hampton Palace, Hampton Court I mean, and see a poor, half-starved, snuffy-nosed old woman showing the now nearly empty rooms, and saying in a shrill though sleepy tone: "And here 's Prince George of Denmark over the chimney." Then, with a sigh: "Over the chimney Prince George of Denmark," hoping her task near over.

Now don't you be thinking of her when I show my little show, as Mrs Siddons was caught recollecting some of my silly jokes, and burst out o' laughing in the most mournful part of Aspasia's character, to the amusement of Kemble and annoyance of all the actors at rehearsal.

Adieu, dear Sir, and burn this nonsense, for the sake of your faithful, obliged,

H. L. P.

Give my truest regards to your brother, and tell the lady you love best how sincerely I am disposed to love her; and write to me from Streatham Park. Oh! that is the letter I long for.

To Sir James Fellowes.

18 April, 1816.

My home for fifty years will, I hope, procure me, by disposing of it, a temporary residence for the remainder of my short term; and what more ought to be wished by one who will soon take up a narrower space? I am glad Squib* is so sanguine. Did you see real Squib, the father? he is a very good-looking man.

There is an old story of Balbus,† when Quæstor at Seville, throwing an auctioneer to the Lyons in his menagerie, because a female friend, who was selling up her possessions, complained to him that the auctioneer was so ugly and deformed, he frightened all buyers away. Our people will lose no bidders by that fault; but is it not odd that the world, with all its fluctuations, should have undergone so little change? Always vexations, disappointments, and inadequate anger for what can hardly be helped, though the mode of expressing that anger is altered by the different situations of society.

Always a friend or two, perhaps, in the world like Sir J—— F——; always luckless ladies enough, like your faithful, obliged,
H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Here is the 9th of May; and now if S— J—— F—— renews his kind invitation very pressingly, I will have the honor to wait on him and his lady in the Whitsun Week, having a mind to break up, as children say, for the holy days, and run to see the Waterloo Bridge, the Western Exchange, and other London wonders; then return, shut my front windows, and protest myself (with the strictest truth) in the country.

Hope, says Lord Bacon, is a good breakfast, but a bad supper; and with regard to this life, he is right; no other supper would sit easy, however, during the long night of the grave.

Do you feel interested in Southey's or Canning's Attack and Defence? I am pleased to see them turn with so much vigor on their enemies.

* The well known auctioneer of Saville Row.

† The anecdote is recorded in a letter to Cicero from Apicius Pollio.

The prettiest new book, however, is "Chalmers on Modern Astronomy," which he reconciles to Scripture in a manner he seems to fancy unexampled, but it is not so. The work is worth reading, nevertheless, and I have a notion you would like it.

Let me hear that you are very busy. Business for men of leisure, and leisure for men of business, in due proportions I mean, would really add to mortals' happiness here below more than mortal man can imagine.

Adieu ; and believe me, yours most faithfully,

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Wednesday, 22 May, 1816.

MY dear Sir James has broken the Mum at last ; and I will now tell him how we are hesitating between a convenient house on the Queen's Parade, or pretty No. 8 Gay Street, which is particularly inconvenient for the servants below stairs. Either of them ought to content me well enough after how I have been living, — a common expression, but infamous bad English.

Apropos, Charles Kemble has been here acting ; and in some part of a comedy written by Murphy, said, "We are like Cymon and Iphigēnia in Dryden's Fables." The ladies stared, but the scholars said he was right ; and I said it were better be wrong than so pedantic, for 't is always called Iphigēnia in common use. Mr Lutwyche held with the wise men, and he, you know, is a good prosodist. I quoted Pope's "Homer," 9th book,

"Laodice and Iphigēnia fair,
And bright Chrysothemis with golden hair."

"O," said Mr. Mangin, "Pope is no firm authority ; he calls the wife of Pluto Prōserpine, as in colloquial chat, when writing his fine ode on St. Cecilia's Day. But old Milton disdained such barbarism ; he calls her Prōsērpina, as in the Greek." We all appealed to Falconer ; dear Sir J—— was too far away. I know not the success of our appeal yet.

Well ! here are fine apple-blossoms, pink and white, as any lady can make herself, and here is peace, too, and I think plenty.

When were all looking at the fireworks in 1748, from tempo-

rary buildings, fragile enough I suppose, Dr. Barton merrily exclaimed, "Do you call this a good peace, which brings so many heads to the scaffold?"

Adieu, dear Sir, and believe me ever, yours faithfully,

H. L. P.

In reference to the intended sale at Streatham, my health will be better when the whole business is decided. At present I have neither taste nor smell; and as Prior says,

"No man would ask for my opinion
Between an oyster and an onion" (pronounce inion).

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, Saturday Night, 3d August, 1816.

I AM so glad to leave this town, with the agreeable taste of what was most agreeable to me in it, that I shall never have done thanking you, dear Sir, for your very kind letter, and shall direct this straight forward to Adbury House. After church to-morrow, the chaise runs us to Rodborough, another two days more will finish the journey, and I shall see Salusbury's babies.

The lady in the straw. Query, why do we say lying-in-women are in the straw? I think it was originally an allusion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, who had no other accommodation.

Lady F—— is very obliging, she will like Grimsthorpe so much; I am glad you are going, and shall be most glad when you return. I pass some happy days together in Gay Street: the plate is already on the door with my name, and you will say, "I see she has brasoned it."* The old ebony chairs from Streatham Park will meet you in the entry, and it will make the house look like home, and if you advise me to, so I will make it my home, buying the lease and furniture. If I really should return from Wales, bright and brisk, and if (to speak in earnest) it

* "Until to some conspicuous square they pass,
And blazon on the door their names in brass." — *Don Juan*.

When Lord Stowell married and set up house with the Marchioness of Sligo, the brass plate with his name was placed under the brass plate with hers. "So," said Jekyll, "I find you are already obliged to knock under." Lord Stowell reversed the position of the plates. "Now," said Jekyll, "you are knocked up."

should please God that I should — O how many shoulds! — live this longest of all long years through, and like to begin another in the same place, why then I will purchase the whole concern. Nor will Salusbury have reason to regret, as £ 1,000 may be better by that time in stone than in stock, &c.

S—— is the wise man I always thought him, and forbearing to make one among the shoal of self-impelled fish, that rush to the opposite shore, they know not why, is a new proof of it.

Madame D'Arblaye, cydevant my dear friend Miss Burney, says there are 50,000 English at Paris now. Suppose on an average each spent only a guinea a week, what a sum is quitting the country for a year? and they will not stay a shorter time if economy is their point — £ 2,600,000 50,000 millions (an't it) and £ 600,000.

Should not some stop be put to the folly? And we the while making subscriptions which they avoid, and you feeding the poor whom they neglect!

How I shall delight in seeing Adbury House and environs! and hearing the cottagers blessing my worthy friends. Assure yourself, dear Sir, such blessings are your best purchases. Meanwhile, the workmen must have their share, and what is very odd, one hates them at first, and for a long time indeed; but I remember Piozzi and I felt a strange vacancy in our minds, when they were all gone. 'Tis so in everything. We had an oak-tree in a little island no bigger than itself, and surrounded with water, which an oak-tree abhors. We dried the pond up, and the tree pined away.

But here comes Miss Williams, loaded with presents for me to carry to her family; and not another word can I say, and not another moment have I to say it in.

To Miss Fellowes.

THIS letter to dear Miss F., begun at Blake's Hotel, London, will be ended at Streatham Park. Your brother, and the kind General (Garston) have called, and will meet me at the old house. I hope he will be there to receive me, or how shall I present myself to the lady?

London looks very dull, very' dull indeed ; I augur ill of the times, and feel glad to be going where love and happiness attend me. Saturday I saw one of my daughters, who rejected all connection with the place for herself and Co. ; and now every true friend I have in the world, dear Sir J—— first in command, must and do approve of my putting everything to open sale. I have surely suffered enough, and you and your good father know I have suffered within less than what people call, an inch of one's life.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Streatham Park, 2 April.

WELL ! I have presented myself, and the lady (who is much nearer to a very pretty woman than I expected) received me with great kindness. Lady Abdy and Miss Abdy are here and charming.

We dine with them next Thursday, when Sir —— goes to the Drawing Room, and we return here at night, and leave them Saturday morning, to dine with business people at London.

The men are here making catalogues, and calling out for my dear Miss ——'s ever faithful,

H. L. P.

This note was written in King Street, 6th Jan. 1816, 10 P. M.

THANKS, a thousand and a thousand more, my dear Sir. Your kindness is without limitation, and your pity very soothing to a mind, which once could fly so high, but wounded as it has been, flutters now and beats the ground, when trying to rise up and (like Floretta's goldfinch) to sing in circles round your head, as gratitude demands from your incessantly obliged,

H. L. P.

Buenos noches,
Felicissima notte,
Bon soir,
Gute nacht,
Good night,
Vale.

On her return from London she thus writes : —

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, Wednesday, 10 April, 1816.

My dear S—— and Lady —— will like to hear that I got safe through the thunder and lightning on Sunday evening by taking shelter at Salt Hill, from whence I ran hither, over a road watered as if by a water-cart, the next day, and arrived at my smoky hut on Monday night, eighty-eight miles in twelve hours.

I found Lady Keith's card on my table at Blake's Hotel on Saturday night, and returned the visit on Sunday, leaving the kindest letter I knew how to write. I did more: I left orders with Leak and Squibb to take their money if they offered, but if they did not offer, to hurry on the sale of the pictures at Streatham, and put me out of pain as soon as possible.

This morning I went into a public auction here in Milsom Street, and saw sold a varnished-up performance of Peter Neef, for thirty-four guineas; this gave me spirits, so did the story of these Bank restrictions, which they say will operate immediately in making money plenty.

I am a miserable financier, but you will understand me, as Miss Streathfield's maid said I should, when she asked me to lend her lady *Milk and Asparagus Lost*. I did immediately comprehend her meanings and sent her the "Milton's Paradise Lost" you saw in Streatham Park Library. Perhaps my Bank restrictions may be as awkwardly worded.

Adieu! this vile paper tears my worn-out pens, and my worn-out patience quite to pieces, or I would send more, though kinder I could not send.

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, 30 May, 1816.

MY DEAR SIR, — I will be careful about sea-bathing. Dr. Gibbes bid me beware of the reaction, but what can one do towards keeping such thing at a distance? Cowper says, you know, and truly and sweetly: —

" Fate steals along with silent tread,
Most dangerous when least we dread;
Frowns in the storm with angry brow,
But in the sunshine strikes the blow."

Now, don't you believe me low spirited; few people ever had such uniformly good spirits. Did I tell you I had saved Murphy* from the general wreck? and that Mr. Watson Taylor wrote after me to beg him for £157 10s.; but I am no longer poor, and when I was, there ought surely to be some difference made between fidelity and unkindness. When B——'s (Burneys) were treacherous and Baretti boisterous against poor unoffending H. L. P., dear Murphy was faithful found, among the faithless faithful only he:—

" He, like his muse, no mean retreating made,
But followed faithful to the silent shade."

Equally attached to both my husbands, he lived with us till he could in a manner live no longer; and his portrait is now on the easel, with that of Mr. Thrale, coming to Bath; my mother, whom both of them adored, keeping them company.

Let us, however, bid you farewell, assuring you how much I am, yours,

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, Tuesday, 9 July, 1816.

NOT yet forgotten by dear Sir James Fellowes, his old friend hastens to inform him that she *does* mend, slowly and heavily; but yet she feels climbing up, rather than sliding down, the hill.

So Sheridan is going, and Mrs. Jordan gone,—in want both of them, though perhaps not actually of want either of them. Shocking enough! and Mary Mayhew dying; and Miss Katherine Griffith dead. *Equo pede pulsat* the old enemy Death:—

Le Pauvre en sa cabane où le chaume le couvre
Est sujet à ses Loix:
Et la garde qui veille à la porte du Louvre,
N'en défend pas nos Rois.

* Portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds, painted for the library at Streatham.

The Misses here are all reading "Glenarvon,"* "a monstrous tale of things impossible," at least one hopes so. I have finished it at last, though not comprehended it; and can only say with King Lear:—

"An ounce of civet, good Apothecary,
To sweeten my imagination."

Your dear father and mother, meanwhile, are happier than the very poets could dream for them, if Miss —— would but get quite well, I think this world has no more to give them. You, dear Sir, must present them my truest regards, and accept every good wish from yours ever,

H. L. P.

I feel sorry the Parliament is broken up; for, laugh as one may, in that house does reside the united wisdom of the nation. "Wisdom," says Solomon, "crieth in the streets, but no man heareth." I think in London streets the horn blowers and the flowers in blow contrive to drown his voice.

To Miss Fellowes.

Bath, 18 July, 1816.

YOUR letter, dear Miss Fellowes, came to my hand late last night. I do not, this morning, believe this the *last* day of our foolish and wicked world, but I think it the *worst* day I ever saw at this season of the year. All are uneasy about the ruin it is causing, and though nothing impels English people into church but a famous preacher, many feel alarm at the effect this extraordinary weather will have on the hay and corn.† Meanwhile our friends here at pretty T——i would be happy but for the necessity of fires in July, and the oddity of living enveloped with cold mist, unable to enjoy their beautiful spot, or see fifty yards from it.

Death still holds a court for himself here in New King Street; whence poor old Colonel Erving will be carried to Walcot in a

* A novel by Lady Catherine Lamb; the two principal characters were supposed to be intended for Lord Byron and herself.

† On the 18th July, 1860, the weather and its apprehended consequences were the same.

day or two: I shook hands with him on Monday morning, and passed him in a chair, going out. On Wednesday morning, much earlier than that hour, he was a corpse; without any previous illness, except mere old age. Dr. Fellowes remembers him in America.

Have you read "Glenarvon," and its key? I hope some newer fooling has taken up the Londoners' attention by now. We Bath folks are content to admire Lady Loudon and Moira's beautiful Asiatic, not having Lady H——'s atheist to stare at;* but anything will do. But I am detaining you with questions concerning people and things by this time wholly forgotten among your folks.

Distance between friends produces that certain vexation: one talks to them on worn-out subjects always, and that is the grand cause of letters being generally insipid, unless they tell of one's health; and I think yours and mine have long been absent from their owners; yours only mislaid, I hope; but lost, and of no value to those who find it, is the once very strong and active constitution of your truly faithful and obliged friend,

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, Monday, 22 July, 1816.

HERE'S terrifying weather indeed. Such a thunder-storm on the 18th as I have seldom seen in England. B. J——'s observed the fire ball in the street, and report soon told us the frightful effects left behind it at poor Windsor's here in James Street. You must remember to have copper, not iron, bell-wires; nothing else saved the lives of those pretty children: I live to the fields, you know, and escaped all the wonders, nor could quite believe till Mrs. Windsor shewed me her floor, burned in places, her wall pushed in, and her plate-warmer in the kitchen perforated very curiously indeed; and all this on a cold rainy day.

Worse storms tear the atmosphere to pieces in Italy every summer evening, yet I never but once heard of any life lost or endan-

* The late Mr. Allen, who lived with Lord and Lady Holland as a member of the family, was called Lady Holland's pet atheist.

gered; but then they have no newspapers, so much may happen without one's hearing of it.

Miss W——s showed me a letter from Lady ——e that says, M—— M——w is getting quite well by taking the juice of red nettles!! I never heard of red nettles before; and make no doubt but a few pebble-stones boyled in milk would be just as efficacious. But Hope is drawn with an anchor always, and common sense is never strong enough to weigh it up.

The mischief is, we seldom drop or cast it in the proper harbor; it would then keep steady, and deserve the name the Romans gave it, *anchora sacra*. I shall probably not live to see you in the happy character of father; but remember my words, or rather those of old Archbishop Leighton; when speaking of education, he said, "Fill you the bushel with good wheat yourself; because then fools and foes will have less room to cram in chaff."

Nothing better has ever been said upon the subject. Adieu! you well know how to get more such stuff when you wish it, from dear Sir, your old and faithful friend,

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, Wednesday, 18 September, 1816.

. The best scraps I could pick up, you will read over leaf. They were written in imitation of the Greek verses by Metrodorus, or Posidippus (which was it?) for "Life against Life." I read them long ago, translated in the "Adventurer;" but cannot recollect what number they are in, besides that I possess not the book.

FOR LONDON.

Can we through London streets be led
Without rejoycing as we tread?
The city's wealth our eye surveys,
The court attracts our lighter gaze;
Whilst charity her arm extends,
And sick and poor fine host of friends.
Wit sparkles round our rosy wine,
And beauty boasts her charms divine:

Musick prolongs our festive nights,
 And morning calls to fresh delights ;
 A London residence then give,
 For here alone I seem to live.

AGAINST LONDON.

Can London streets by man be trod
 Without repenting on the road ?
 Where nobles, whelmed in shame or debt,
 And bankrupts swell each sad gazette ;
 All licensed death our frame attacks,
 And to his aid calls hosts of quacks ;
 False smiles on beauty's face appear,
 And wit evaporates in a sneer.
 Dangers impede our days' delights,
 And vermin vex our sleepless nights ;
 From London, then, let 's quickly fly
 In rural shades to live or die.

After a good dose of London, and then A——y, I think you will read these verses *con amore*.

Yours, dear Sir, ever,

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, 25 September, 1816.

THE promptness with which I answer dear Sir J—— F—— is the surest proof of my rejoicing in his letters. We had a delightful day at F——, where Mr. H—— F—— and I had no little talk upon the subject you recommended to my consideration, and which is surely now the most interesting of all subjects.

My private opinion is, that the person who leads the Hebrews on, against their old oppressor, the Sultan, is one of the false, the Pseudo-Christ, against whom our Lord warns his disciples ; first, in the 24th chapter of St. Matthew, 4th and 5th verses ; then in the same chapter 23d and 24th verses. The first of these impostors arose very soon after Christ's Ascension, Barchochebas by name, and he vomited fire, and led astray multitudes. Dositheus was another ; I think "Retrospection" mentions one or

two, and we had Joanna Southcote within these two or three years in England. She seems to have been one of those mentioned in the 26th verse of the same chapter, saying, "Behold he is in the secret chambers," but, says our Saviour, "Go not forth." The same injunctions are repeated in St. Mark, the 13th chapter, 6th verse; and the 8th chapter of St. Luke gives a similar prohibition. This person, however, may be the great Antichrist, or Antechrist, though I do not believe it. The Protestants, you know, have attributed that character uniformly to the Papal Power; but Romanists, following the opinion of Father Malvenda, a Spanish Fryar, who flourished in 1600, and was an admirable Hebraist, believe that Antichrist is to be a Jew, of the tribe of Dan, that he will reign three years and a half, and shew many miracles. When Jacob pronounced his prophetic blessing on his sons, he says, "Dan shall be a serpent in the way," and a dragon was always painted on their standard. Jeremiah says, "the armies of Dan shall devour the earth;" and when St. John, in his Apocalypse, saw the angel sealing the twelve tribes of Israel, 't is observable that Dan is omitted. Conjectures concerning Antichrist are, however, quite innumerable. There is a folio volume in our Bodleian Library at Oxford, written to assert that Oliver Cromwell was the person, and Mr. Faber, you know, said it was Buonaparte, or gave us reason to believe he thought so. St. Paul's description of him in his 2d chapter of his 2d epistle to the Thessalonians as preceding the general judgment, does always appear to me as if designed to portray *one single man*, whoever he may be; but Bishop Newton and all cool expositors seem to think the Papacy was intended; and your brother, as an orthodox Protestant divine, is of that opinion.

Meanwhile it does strike all reflecting people that great changes are about to take place; things advance with a velocity best compared to the rapidity of a wheel down hill, increasing at every step. I own myself convinced of the approach of

"That great day for which all days were made;
Great day of dread, decision, and despair,
When nature struggling in the pangs of death
Shows God in terrors and the skies on fire."

YOUNG.

Whether this catastrophe is to happen forty or fifty years hence, is, however, of no consequence to *me* as an individual. My last day must come long before.

The nonsense verses for and against London were written when I was very sick of it, so the last were best of course. You must read Gray's "Connections between Sacred Writ and Classic Literature;" it is a very fine performance and much admired.

Yours while

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

30 September, 1816.

. IN January, 1817, such will be my fortune; and who in their wits, circumstanced as I am, can wish for more? Your dear mother laughed when I told her I was buying plate, linen, &c., to begin the world with, like a boy just come of age.

But life is a strange thing, and has been often compared to a river. "Labitur et labetur," &c.

Leave the lofty glacier's side,
 Leave the mountain's solemn pride:
 Down some gently sloping hill
 Let's pursue this silent rill,
 Noiseless as it seems to flow,
 Wrapt in some poetic dream:
 Watch the windings of the stream.
 In such varied currents twisting,
 Still escaping, still existing:
 Let us find life's emblem here:
 Haste away! The lake is near.

Wales inspired these verses, which, of course, Sir J—— F—— never saw; but he can make life valuable as delightful. God keep the lake far distant from *him* for a thousand sakes.

Dr. Robert Gray, who wrote the new book that every one is reading, wrote the lines under our sun-dial at Brynbella:—

"Umbra tegit lapsas, præsentique imminet horæ;
 Dum lux, dum lucis semita virtus agat."

"Ere yet the threat'ning shade o'erspread the hour,
Hasten, bright Virtue, and assert thy power."

The well known George Henry Glasse * said there was a fault in the prosody, and wished to correct it, as thus:—

"Umbra tegit lapsam, præsentique imminet horæ
Hospes, disce ex me vivere, disce mori."

"Ere yet the unreturning shadows fly,
Go mortals; learn to live and learn to die."

Tell me which you prefer; I like the English of the last best, myself; but the first, of course, remains round the little marble pillar set up by Mr. Piozzi, and very much admired for its elegance. O, what a beautiful house and place it is! Salusbury did make me the compliment of not cutting down a weeping-willow we planted, because I had made verses on it.

* The Rev. George Henry Glasse, author of several volumes of sermons, and some translations from the learned languages. Amongst Mrs. Piozzi's papers were found notes of the following anecdotes concerning him. On Miss Blaquieres bidding him write some verses for her, he said, "he had nothing to write upon." "Then," replied the lady, "write upon *nothing*," he immediately obeyed:—

"And wilt thou, Nymph, compel my lays,
And force me sing thy rival's praise?
Why, then, in *this* thing let 's agree,
That I love *no* thing more than thee."

On passing through a turnpike gate to officiate at a neighboring parish, he claimed exemption from paying the toll; the turnpike-man, who was intoxicated, insisted upon payment, making use of abusive language and swearing many oaths; upon which Mr. Glasse paid the toll demanded, saying at the same time that he should have it returned or the man should be fined for every oath he had sworn; this Glasse carried into effect. Shortly afterwards he received a letter from the turnpike-man, fining him for not reading the Swearing Act once a quarter in the Church, agreeably to the Act of Parliament then in force.

His life terminated strangely and lamentably. He had been to the city to raise a sum of money to pay his debts, or (some say) to enable him to escape from his creditors to the Continent. On his return in a hackney-coach, he left his pocket-book containing the money in bank-notes on the seat, and on discovering his loss, committed suicide. The day following, the pocket-book with its contents was brought by the driver to the hotel at which he had stopped. Neptune Smith was more fortunate. He flung himself into the sea after casting up his betting book, from a conviction that the balance was against him; was fished out, found that he had cast up his book wrong, and lived many years to exult in his nickname.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, Monday, 7 October, 1816.

I HAVE got no new books to read; Mr. Whalley recommended me some verses, a long poem indeed, but to me very unintelligible. Modern writers resemble the cuttle-fish that hides himself from all pursuers in his own ink. That is not Doctor Gray's case, however: I think you will like his performance exceedingly. The weather is as gloomy as November, and the poor gleaners can get no corn out of the stubble; it rots and grows, and threatens ruin both to small and great.

Miss Hudson says a famine will bring us to our senses; I say it will deprive us of the little wits we have left. The delirium proceeding from hunger will have fatal consequences, because vulgar minds will feel sure that 't is somebody's fault, and woe to the mortal they pitch upon.

Send a consoling word, dear Sir, for my fancy sees very bad visions. The world always does see most to endure, when most blind, says old Fuller; perhaps that is now the case with yours faithfully and gratefully,

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, 11 October, 1816.

IN adversity, in prosperity, ever dear and kind friend, my Wraxall opens well. What signifies knowledge locked up, either in man or book? I think if Lady Keith has a fault besides her disregard of poor H. L. P., that is hers.

O, here is a new book come out, that I know not how she will like, or how the public will like. Do you remember my telling you, that in the year 1813, when I was in London upon Salisbury's business, before his marriage some months, a Mr. White sent to tell me, through Doctor Myddleton, that he possessed a manuscript of Johnson's, and wished me to ascertain that the handwriting was his own. I invited both gentlemen to dinner, — we were at Blake's Hotel, — and Dr. Gray, afterwards Bishop of Bristol, met them, and I saw that the MSS. was genuine. It

was a diary of the little journey that Mr. Thrale, and Mr. Johnson (such he was then), and Miss Thrale, and myself made into North Wales, in the year 1774. There was nothing in it of consequence, that I saw, except a pretty parallel* between Hawkestone, the country seat of Sir Richard Hill, and Ilam, the country seat of Mr. Port, in Derbyshire. But the gentleman who possessed it, seemed shy of letting me read the whole, and did not, as it appeared, like being asked how it came into his hands, but repeatedly observed he would print it, only it was not sufficiently bulky for publication. He said he could swell it out, &c.

We parted, however, and met no more; but when I came first into New King Street, here, Nov. 1814, a poor widow woman, a Mrs. Parker, offering me seventeen genuine letters of Doctor Johnson, which I could by no means think of purchasing for myself, in my then present circumstances; I recommended her to apply to Mr. White, and she came again in three weeks' time better dressed, and thanked me for the twenty-five guineas he had given her; from which hour I saw her no more, nor ever heard of or from Mr. White again.

Since you and I parted at Streatham Park, however, a Mr. Duppa has written me many letters, chiefly inquiring after my family; what relationship I have to Lord Combermere, to Sir Lynch Salusbury Cotton, &c., and comically enough asking who my aunt was, and if she was such a fool as Doctor Johnson described her. I replied she was my aunt only by marriage, though related to my mother's brother, who she did marry; that she was a Miss Cotton, heiress of Etwall and Belleport, in Derbyshire. Her youngest sister was Countess of Ferrers, and none of them particularly bright, I believe, but as I expressed it, Johnson was a good despiser.

So now here is Johnson's Diary, printed and published with a facsimile of his handwriting. If Mr. Duppa does not send me one, he is as shabby as it seems our Doctor thought me, when I gave but a crown to the old clerk. The poor clerk had probably never seen a crown in his possession before. Things were very distant A. D. 1774, from what they are 1816.

* This "pretty parallel" is what I had in my mind when speaking of Johnson's notice of Lord Kilmorey's place, *ante*, p. 52.

I am sadly afraid of Lady K.'s being displeased, and fancying I promoted this publication. Could I have caught her for a quarter of an hour, I should have proved my innocence, and might have shown her Duppa's letter; but she left neither note, card, nor message, and when my servant ran to all the inns in chase of her, he learned that she had left the White Hart at twelve o'clock. Vexatious! but it can't be helped.

I hope the pretty little girl my people saw with her, will pay her more tender attention.

To Sir James Fellowes.

October 14, 1816.

YOUR brother Dorset has lent me Bubb Dodington's Diary, and I have done nothing but read it ever since. 'T is a retrospection of my young days, very amusing certainly, but anecdote is all the rage, and Johnson's Diary is selling rapidly, though the contents are *bien maigre*, I must confess. Apropos, Mr. Duppa has sent me the book, and I perceive has politely suppressed some sarcastic expressions about my family, the Cottons, whom we visited at Combermere, and at Llewenny. I was the last of the Salusburys, so they escaped. But I remember his saying once, "It would be no loss if all your relations were spitted like larks, and roasted for the lap-dog's supper."

It would certainly have been no loss to me, as they have behaved themselves; but one hates to see them insulted.

This letter is written in the dark, you will hardly be able to read it, but if words are wanting, supply the chasm with the kindest. They will have best chance to express the unalterable sentiments of

H. L. P.

Your brother Dorset and I disagree only in our opinions concerning Buonaparte, of whom he thinks much higher than I do; although, as Balzac says of the Romans:—

"Le ciel benissoit toutes leurs fautes,
Le ciel couronnoit toutes leurs folies."

We must, however, watch the end; for, till a man dies, we can neither pronounce him very great or very happy; so said at least one of the sages of antiquity. Adieu!

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, Fryday, 1 Nov. 1816.

WHEN my heart first made election of Sir James Fellowes, not only as a present, but a future friend, I felt rather than knew, that he would never forget or forsake me. Everything I see and hear confirms my saucy prejudice.

Such a Sunday evening I passed in Marlborough Buildings,* where I used to meet friends, so beloved, companions so cheerful, sent me home to Bessy Jones † with a half-breaking heart; and in every vein Johnson's well-founded horror of the last.

The family left Bath next day for Paris, where they have taken a house for a year! Poor Boisselier is dead, you know. One could not care in earnest for Boisselier, but at my age, 't is like losing the milestones in the last stage of a long journey.

We shall, however, both of us, have a cruel loss in the Lutwyches. How happy, how elegant is the epitaph on poor Mary. Beautiful, though not too showy; just as it should be. I am afraid to trust myself with translating or even praising it.

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, Nov. 29, 1816.

ANOTHER letter you shall have, dear Sir, and that directly.

Cobbett has been galvanizing the multitude finely, I am told, in his last paper. "Be scum no longer," says he, "be no longer called scum, I say." Did I ever tell you a story of which this reminds me, concerning the blind Lord North's father, old Guildford; who delighted in affecting coarse expressions, and used to say to his friends when he met them, "O, such a one, how does the pot boil?" Some democrat, who probably disliked the rough address, when Wilkes and liberty set London maddening, called to Lord Guildford across a circle of ladies round the tea-table, and cried exultingly, "Well, my good lord, how does the pot boil now?"

"Troth, Sir," replied the peer, without hesitation, "just as you gentlemen would wish it to do, — scum uppermost."

* At the house of the Lutwyches.

† Her maid.

I am so afraid this tale is not new to you, any more than baptizing the bells. We have two in England, you know, that were christened Thomas. The Oxford one I forgot all account of; but when the devil was set up to look over Lincoln Cathedral, the wise folk found baptizing the bell was an efficacious method of sending him off. Some of their conclave, however, being incredulous, "Let us," said they, "baptize the bell by name of the doubting apostle, and that will do," so he is Tom o' Lincoln.

I fancy the phenomenon you allude to at Valencia, where they are, I trust, not much improved in philosophy, was a real meteor. The atmosphere is loaded with vapor, certainly, in a way not wholly natural; and has been all the summer, if summer it may be called. Adieu!

This letter has been written all by scraps and snatches; people coming in without ceasing, and stealing the wits from my head, the pen from my fingers, every moment. Let it at least do its duty in presenting my best regards and compliments to ——'s acceptance.

Paper therefore fly with speed,
Let thy friend make haste to read,
To be read, is all thy meed,
Hark! the bell is ringing!

Can such stuff come from any creature but

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, 27 Dec. 1816.

THANK you, my dear Sir, for the kind wishes that I restore you from my heart a hundred-fold.

It was odd enough, and pretty enough, that the happiest day of the year should have been the finest; but indeed I never saw such a 25th of December, and what blowing weather followed! But we must expect it now to be slippy, drippy, nippy; after which, showery, bowery, flowery; then hoppy, croppy, poppy; oh! and autumn, wheezy, sneezy, freezy; as good, sure, as Fabre d'Eglantine's Nivose, Pluviose, Ventose, &c. I wonder if any of that nonsense will be remembered!

There is a good French joke now at Paris, concerning the King's illness ; for say the Jacobins,

“ Si Louis s'en allait,
Charles dix paraîtrait.”

Meaning that

“ Charles *dis*-paraîtrait.”

’T is well they are so merrily disposed.

Mrs. Lutwyche writes in capital spirits, but your own dear father's heart is as light as a Frenchman's, though solid like John Bull. We had a world of chat to-day when he brought me your letter about Lord and Lady Mount Edgecombe, being parted like Mr. Sullen and his wife in the comedy ; east, west, north, south ; far as the Poles asunder. They have been married just nine months. She wedded twice before, and now they cry, “ O terque quaterque beati ! ” I suppose.

Mrs. Dimond offers me a place in her box to-night, whence will be seen Massinger's horrible “ Sir Giles Overreach,” played by Mr. Kean. If he can stretch that hideous character as he does others, quite beyond all the authors meant or wished, it will shock us too much for endurance, though in these days people do require mustard to everything. Actors, preachers, whoever keeps within the bounds of decency, — may not we add patriots ? — are all censured for tameness, and considered as cold-hearted animals, scarce worthy to crawl on the earth.

Meanwhile, the thoughts of your Adbury establishment charm me, and I feel sure that my dear friend will never fall into this new and fatal whimsey, of fattening beasts, while men are wanting food. It is a senseless thing to see calves and sheep crammed till they cannot walk, but are driven into the town for show, in their carriage, like Daniel Lambert in his easy chair, when the mutton and veal so managed is not eatable, and the very fat useless to tallow-chandlers for want of solidity. I really wonder nobody takes the matter up as seriously censurable.*

We are subscribing here at a great rate, to imitate the Londoners. I told Hammersley, that the donation of £ 50,000 to 50,000 poor, put me in mind of Merlin, the German mechanick,

* It was remarked by Lord Macaulay that prize oxen were only fit to make candles, and prize poems to light them.

who, when the people were terrifying each other about the invasion, some five and thirty years ago, proposed to let them come, and then meet them with a guinea each, and beg of them to go home, — never reflecting, till heartily laughed at, that they would come again next week for another guinea apiece. Surely these are senseless methods of preserving tranquillity.* The people want nothing but employment and pay, and then they will love the hand that helps them, while feeding them by subscription leaves them not a whit obliged, but in some sort, and scarce unjustly, offended; while the donors are impoverishing themselves.

Well! all this you know better than I do, but Doctor Fellowes charged me to give you some tidings of my own health, because I confessed to him that I had been taking dear No. 1, and he probably thought that if the sails would not turn with a common wind, it was a proof somewhat was the matter with the mill; but with all my comforts it would be graceless to complain.

Adieu, dear Sir; may your next year be happy! all spring, showery, bowery, flowery. I really do believe it will be the happiest year of your life, it will make of the most dutiful and affectionate son upon earth the wisest and tenderest father. Do not, however, forget, that in 1815, you promised long and faithful friendship to her who knows the value of all your good qualities, and who will be, while life last, perhaps still longer, your sincere, as obliged,

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, 4th January, 1817.

'T is well for me, dear Sir, that my letters meet so kindly partial a reader; for I have a notion they often repeat themselves. Doctor Johnson, and men less wise than he, say we forget everything but what passes in our own mind. Those ideas are among the most fleeting of mine.

That I had not seen the great actor (Kean) in Sir Giles Over-

* They are not much unlike what were proposed by sundry opponents of the Volunteer Movement at its commencement. Some years ago, during a popular rising in Yorkshire, a well-known banker wrote to the Home Office, that if the malcontents did not receive a cheque (meaning check) he would not answer for the consequences. The obvious answer was, that he was the best man to apply the proposed remedy.

reach when last writing to Adbury, is, however, perfect in my remembrance ; he did it very finely indeed. A clear voice and dignified manner are not necessary to the character, and personal beauty would take off too much from one's aversion. I was well entertained, and caught no cold at all.

My New Year's Day party went off to everybody's satisfaction. Next morning brought verses with "Attic wit" and "graceful Piozzi" in them, and praises of the music, which I praised myself for enduring. With good manœuvring, however, I kept them from singing Italian, and everybody was the better pleased ; but I had rather talk of your trees.

Miss Williams says you must make the children of you cottagers bring in the Hawthorn berries at so much the lapful, and put them in a large tub or pot, and place them in sand, — a layer of berries, and a layer of sand, — to be put out at the proper season. Acorns, too, might be gathered, she says, every autumn, and save you buying dwarfish and ricketty things from imposing nursery and seedsmen. Her care for your pocket is very comical indeed, but those fine plantations at her brother's country seat haunt the poor dear soul's fancy everlastingly ; and she remembers and knows that £5 would have paid the whole cost ; for in old Judge Williams's time there were not, as now, things of every kind to be bought. They planted their own beech mast and fir apples ; and certainly the trees are worth ten times as much to posterity. Miller, the great botanist of fifty years ago, told me that an acorn grounded, as he expressed it, on the same day with a seven year's old oak, would be taller and stronger than his competitor in seven years' time. I told Mr. Thrale so, but he was in haste to be happy ; and now the trees he bought, — younglings, — are nothing, as you saw, while Bodylwyddan Woods are quite in a thriving state.

So here's a wise letter, and that always resembles a dull one ; but let dulness have its due : and remember that if life and conversation are happily compared to a bowl of punch, there must be more water in it than spirit, acid, or sugar. Besides that, I am convinced 't is variety alone can delight us either in a book or a companion.* "Rather than always wit, let none be there," says

* "On ne plaît pas longtemps si l'on n'a qu'une sorte d'esprit." — *Roche-foucauld*.

Cowley, who had himself enough for two people, and I know not why, but my heart feels heavy somehow.

Dear! dear! what a fragile thing life is! A young man was riding full gallop down this street* yesterday, and fell down dash at the very spot where Miss Shuttleworth was killed. He is not dead this morning, poor fellow! but in a sad way, I fear. This street always was like Virgil's Tartarus, and now 't is like the high road to it. Coal-carts scrattling up the hill, often used to make me think —

“Hinc ex audiri gemitus, et sæva sonare
Verbera; tum stridor ferri, tractæque catenæ.”

Well, no matter! our exits and entrances are apparently innumerable, and no two alike. Here comes Miss W——, daggled like a duck-shooting spaniel on a dirty November day, and catching her very death with cold, to tell me that S— J—— F—— must not put the seeds of his pine cones, that I call fir apples, into sand. They must be dried in napkins, &c., &c.

So now adieu, my dear Sir. I have got a member of parliament by happy fortune to free my nonsense, and cover with his frank my compliments to —.

I asked my servant how your letter was brought me, for it came in the midst of my little bustle on the 1st of January. “Indeed, Ma’am,” replied the man, “I can’t tell, but it seemed to arrive promiscuously.”

Once more farewell, and believe me ever yours,

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, Sunday, 4 January, 1817.

AH! he was a wise man who said Hope is a good breakfast, but a bad dinner. It shall be my supper, however, when all's said and done, and the epilogue spoken upon poor H. L. P.

This snow will do infinite service, but I want something to string my spirits up to concert pitch. The parties are going forward through frost and snow, but I come home from them, when I *do* go, a little duller than at setting out. One reason is they

* Gay Street, Bath.

will sing to me, the men will ; and O, how much rather would I hear a dog howl !

Your friend —— was very kind, sat and chatted with me very good-naturedly, and did not sing.

Here is a thin quarto book come out concerning Miss McEvoy ; you should see it. The Shropshire boy was not a better deceiver, if the wise men who attest these wonders do indeed give credit to them. For my own part, I think the world is superannuating apace, and I suppose sees double, like drunken people, and horses that are going to lose their eyesight. Such an age of imposture was sure never known. Joanna Southcote, the Fortunate Youth, and Miss McEvoy, all in four years ! With stories of the —— of —— that put belief out of all possibility. Poor Wales, too, a principality without a prince, whenever the king dies.

Mrs. Lutwyche has written from Rome ; says her husband can walk now seven miles o' day. They spend their time in seeing sights under the direction of far-famed Cornelia Knight,* and rejoicing in the society of the first society of the first city in Europe, — never mentioning the famine and distressful state of the inhabitants, which Sir Thomas and Lady Liddel protest is beyond endurance, Capua alone having lost 12,000 human creatures from hunger and consequent disease within the last two years, and this corresponds with Dr. Whalley's account of Northern Italy.

What is one to believe ? Now dispose of my compliments, loves, and respects, and *Addio* !

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, 16 January, 1817.

ON the seventy-sixth anniversary of my life, according to your good father's reckoning, the first thing I do after returning God thanks, is to write to dear Sir James.

Kemble is here, and has called on me ; I was shocked at the alteration in his face and person. Poor fellow ! But the public were, or rather *was*, very contented, and huzzaed his Coriolanus gallantly. I was glad for twenty reasons ; Brutus and Sicinius

* Author of " Marcus Flaminius " and other works.

being precisely the Hunt and Cobbett of 2,000 years ago, it was delightful to hear how they were hissed.

Our hills exhibit a heavy snow, but it does not lie in this warm town.

These are days when nothing can be deemed impossible. I think the people in Thibet are right for my part, who kneel down when a female baby is born, and pray that she may have a physician for her husband. He would at least keep her from such exploits, as Mrs. M——, who frightened me so by going out to dinner into the country the 11th day after delivery; the very hearing of it half killed me, who was then in Wales. Miss W—— walks about this horrid weather with a weight of clothes which would kill any one whose ancestors had not worn armor, and then strips for the evening party, covered (if covered) only by trinkets just fit for the eldest Miss ——. Such is the world, and such are its inhabitants. Do not suffer yourself to be too sorry that I am so near out of it. If my setting sun leaves one long red streak behind, to lengthen the twilight and keep back dark oblivion, shall I not be happy and thankful? whilst I am recollected as your true and trusty old friend,

H. L. P.

Verses on the 16th of January, 1817, the seventy-sixth anniversary of her life.

Whilst all on Piozzi's natal day
 Their tributary offerings pay,
 Of due congratulation;
 Let not my faithful muse forget
 To pay her just, her willing debt,
 Upon the glad occasion.

Nor, lady! deem she here presents
 Those cold unmeaning compliments
 Made only for the ear;
 Hers is true tribute of the heart,
 Expressed, indeed, with little art,
 But honest and sincere.

Then deign t' accept the votive lay,
 Incited by this festal day
 We hail with such delight.

To friendship sacred, and to song,
 Let joy the happy hour prolong,
 And stay their rapid flight.

Nor shall my interested prayer
 Invoke for you one added year
 Than every way may please ;
 I wish their number limited
 To those which come accompanied
 With happiness and ease.

Yet frequent may the Day return,
 And distant that which we shall mourn
 Returns no more for you ;
 With silent pain the mental eye
 Pierces through deep futurity,
 And turns her from the view.

At length, by years alone opprest
 When summoned hence to join the blest
 In their celestial sphere ;
 Resigned you'll quit us at the last,
 Viewing without regret the past,
 The future without fear.

But friendship whispers to the heart,
 That though condemned on earth to part
 From those it loved before :
 Its ties unbroken still remain,
 And former friends shall meet again.
 To separate no more.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, 23 January, 1817.

DOES — ever read novels ? The second and third volumes of a strange book, entitled “Tales of my Landlord” [“Old Mortality”] are very fine in their way.

People say 't is like reading Shakespear ! I say 't is as like Shakespear as a glass of peppermint water is to a bottle of the finest French brandy ; but the third — I think it is the third — volume, is very impressive for the moment, without spectres or

any trick played, except the sensations of Morton when going to be executed, and the gay conversation of Claverhouse immediately following, which is a happy contrast indeed.

I will, however, detain you no longer than to say, — not how much, for it would not be said in an hour, — but how very sincerely I remain, your obliged and faithful friend, whilst

H. L. PROZZI.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, Saturday Night, 8 February, 1817.

I HAVE disengaged myself from the party this evening was to have been lost in, for the pleasure of thanking dear Sir James for the very friendly letter brought me to-day by his happy father, who was going down the town to sign his name among the honest men who promise to rally round our excellent Constitution. All this looks well, as you say; but I so hate to recollect the times* when England was divided between factions much resembling ours, and calling one set petitioners, and the other set *abhorrrers* — of the petitions, I suppose.

France is no happier, no richer than Great Britain; all Europe is enveloped in these frightful fogs.

Your friend and I had a very nice conversation about political economy. The people certainly feel offended at seeing one man receive £12,000, another £20,000 o' year in return for no apparent service done; but I am not sure they are injured at all, unless the possessor carries his wealth and spends it in a foreign country. Were we to roast all the race-horses, and give the corn which feeds them to the poor, making "Hambletonian" into soup, &c., what would become of the grooms and the jockies and their helpers and hangers-on? They would know how to till the ground no better than their masters; and we should have so many more thieves, professed, that are now merely amateurs and dillettanti. Servants out of place are among the worst members of society; and a gentleman once told me that none of the wretches sent to Botany Bay were so truly untractable as that class. "They can do nothing," said he, "but wait at table where

* 1680. See Macaulay's History, Vol. I. p. 256.

there is no one to sit down at it, or stand behind a carriage and cry *Go on* with an air, when no lady listens and no carriage can be found,—

“ ‘ Where the gilt chariot never marks the way,
Where none learn Ombre, none e'er taste Bohea.’ ”

Mr. Robertson has received his money by now. If everybody was really and *bona fide* to use their fortunes with economy, what would become of his 120 pipes of wine and of his correspondence abroad? But he hopes to sell some to the sinecurists, I doubt not, while their valets and livery servants drink an inferior sort. Ah me! Government is a long and sometimes a tangled chain, but tearing but one rusty link will rather weaken than brighten it.

Veniamo ad altro, as Baretti used to say. Boswell and he were both of them treacherous inmates, but their books are very pretty, very interesting, and very well written.

The best writers are not the best friends, and the last character is more to be valued than the first by contemporaries; after fifty years, indeed, the others carry away all the applause.

Apropos, Madame D'Arblay is said to be writing a new work; and the “Pastor's Fireside,” by Miss Porter, comes in for a large share of praise, after the “Tales of my Landlord.” But my paper comes to an end, my candles burn down to the socket, my fire is gone almost out, and I have not yet said, though I hope you have felt, that everything will diminish before either absence or silence can lessen the regard of your obliged and sincere

H. L. PIOZZI.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, 5 March, 1817.

WELL, my dear Sir, Salusbury came to his time, but is obliged to run away so, we have hardly had a moment for necessary chat. I rely on you to tell him what clothes he must wear, what fees he must pay, and to whom. As a prudent mortal, he would willingly have escaped such costly titles; but I really do not think it *right* to refuse honors from a sovereign when offered them; I am not yet so much a modern democrat. “Stick to the

crown, though it hang upon a thornbush," was old Sir William Wyndham's precept, and we have heard none better. Mr. Dorset Fellowes is Mr. Salusbury ready-made friend; he will kindly — in introducing him to you — assist, dear Sir,

Your ever obliged and faithful

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, Sunday, March 9th, 1817.

YOUR melancholy letter, my dear Sir, reminded me of an autograph I once saw of Alexander Pope, saying to Martha Blount: "My poor father died in my arms this morning. If at such a moment I did not forget you; assure yourself I never can. — A. P."

I felt something like the same consolation as she must have done.

M—— is deeply affected . . . loses sleep. I have not seen the D—— P——; everybody makes too sure; we are all *such* hopers. Get —— well, and away for Adbury, where pleasure, and fair weather, and what is well worth both, agreeable entertainments, await you.

This season requires attention in you farmers, and the times require attention from *you* as an English gentleman, — the character perhaps most to be respected of any that Europe has in it.

Stocks rise every hour, but let us not for that reason over-hope ourselves; there are heavy clouds hanging about, and every nation has a right to expect storms: we have not yet had our share.

Farewell, my dear friend, and shew your superiority to disappointment as you have shewn it in a thousand instances to ill-fortune in other forms and shapes — acquiring every one's esteem, and the ever unrivalled regard and value of your obliged servant,

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, Sunday, 20 March, 1817.

At present we are close on Passion Week, a period forgotten in town, I believe, where a gay man once asked me whether

Christmas Day was always on a Fryday? "because," said he, "they call it Good Fryday, don't they? and they neither dance nor play at cards." Such a question could not be asked in Spain or Italy. This moment Miss —— calls for my letter and expresses uneasiness about the dear D——r. I hope her affection magnifies the distress; but at our age we must break; and if the last tickets *do* linger in the wheel, why people will give more than their value for them, though often blanks at last.

These reflections are forced on me by a visit from poor dear Mr. Chappelow, a friend of thirty years' standing, who comes here to take a last leave of poor

H. L. P.!

To Sir James Fellowes.

Begun Sunday, March 29, 1817.

I WAS going to write you a letter this morning, but Miss —— called, and I sent it away half written. My spirits have been much lowered by poor Mr. Chappelow's visit, but this is a season for mortification, and a stronger *memento mori*, saw I never.

Your dear father has sons and daughters round him, but my wretched old friend, a batchelor ecclesiastic, with nobody to tell him that he is getting superannuated, affords indeed a melancholy spectacle.

Mrs. Broadhead, too, dying in the Crescent,* plump and gay three months ago, now pale and wrinkled like one's white handkerchief after Mrs. Siddons' benefit; *mondo! mondanio!* as Baretta used to say.

Well! here's Monday, the first of Passion week, and I do hope the people's hunger for amusement will be suspended here till Easter holidays.

Pretty little Mrs. G., the doctor's wife, must go abroad, or die at home of weakness and atrophy. Parry's colossal form (tenacious of life) permits not his departure, but detains him here, helpless, hopeless, senseless, except to agonizing pain; gout, stone, and palsey, upon one man. Dreadful! and suspended so (like Mahomet's tomb) between life and death.

No matter, those whose lives are longest forget what past in

* This lady is, I believe, living still.

their maturer years, remembering best the early days of youth. Mr. Chappelow, my superannuated visitant, recollects marrying Doctor Parry when he first took orders. Those whose date is shorter, laugh at the parts that are past. The boy despises the baby; the man contemns the boy; a philosopher scorns the man, and a Christian pities them all. When we approach the confines of immortality, however, the best is to look forward; for retrospection is but a blotted page to wiser and better folks than dear Sir James Fellowes's ever obliged and faithful

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, Monday, 14 April, 1817.

I THANK you, my dear Sir, for your kind letter. You are very good-natured to think about my health, who am, as it appears, neither racked with pain, like our poor friend at T., nor panting with an asthma, like the dear Doctor, about whom I observe Miss —— to be visibly uneasy, though by no means well herself.

That we must either outlive those who are most valued by us, or go ourselves, and quit the stage to them, seems hard to remember, though the first lesson that we learn: what we fear to lose rises in value. Distance has such an effect, that even the apprehension produces consequences. "When you were near me," says Pope, "I only thought of you as a good neighbor; at a hundred miles from me, my fancy formed you beautiful; and now! (they had crossed the seas remember) you are a goddess, and your little sister approaching to divinity."*

This was said in sport, but there is truth in most jests. We look on those approaching the banks of a river all must cross, with ten times the interest they excited when dancing in the meadow. Yet let them cross it once, and get fairly out of sight, how soon are they out of mind!

My proximity to the river's brink, all overcast with fog, and now and then disturbed by fume and vapor, shews me very imperfectly the schemes and monstrous projects of our time, and shews me them in disproportions too. They are not regularly

* "T is distance lends enchantment to the view." — CAMPBELL.

formed gyants, like Polypheme, but one-eyed as he was; and weak, although gigantick, from being so badly put together.

The rise of our friends is unnatural, and "nothing now is, but what is not," according to Macbeth's opinion.

A gentleman, far from here, who has large concern in the iron-works of a neighboring county, called fifteen of his principal people together the other day, and told them he was no longer able to give them piecework, — such is the phrase, — because his rents were so ill-paid; but he would present them with a pound note each every Monday morning, till they were to resume their old employment, as he wished might soon be the case for all their sakes. God bless your honor, was the immediate reply: with thanks and expressions of (as he believes) sincere attachment. They said, however, that the bargain could not be formally acceded to, till letters arrived from Manchester, but that they would wait on his honor the following Wednesday, and settle matters. Wednesday came, and so did the fifteen workmen, but with altered countenances. Friends had taught them not to be bamboozled, was their word; so their employer might keep his money, and they would throw themselves upon the parish. A measure instantly adopted, to the distress of the parish, and triumph of their Manchester acquaintance!

So dry a season after a long season of wet, is good for the ground, I dare say; but we shall be all pulverized by and by, if no rain falls. I am already weary on't, and feel apprehensive lest the haymaking should be hurt by an abundance of what we are now sighing for, &c.

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, Fryday night, 16 May, 1817.

WELL, well! 't is fine saying We will do this and we will do that when death is so near, saying, "No, you shall not," to us all. Poor Callan, the upholsterer, my landlady in Westgate Street, went perfectly well to bed, called up her daughter at 4 o'clock, Mrs. Booth, told her she should die in half an hour, and kept her word to a second.

The corporation yesterday, all well and merry, marched down

the South Parade in some silly procession, I know not what, endeavored to cross the river in the ferryboat, upset the machine, and sixteen of them were drowned, at noonday, in sight of the walkers up and down. Mr. Marshall, curate of the abbey, 'scaped by miracle, resolving to walk round and meet them, in spite of their entreaties to make one of the frolickers.

A stranger thing never befell, because the river is so shrunk by our long series of dry weather, I am sure your brother Thomas could cross it on foot; and you know there is a rope, too, which by some marvellous fatality none of them clung to.

So there is no need of ice-islands to drown, or of dreadful diseases to kill us, when it pleases God to call either the great Alexander, or your little friend,

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Wednesday, 28 May, 1817.

MISS — tells me, dear Sir, that she has room in her letter to squeeze in a note from me; but what is to be said in the note, who can tell? We talk here of the insurrection at Brazil, or of the girl that drowned herself yesterday morning, or the ten times more wonderful tale of the Welsh girl, who returned by her own good-will to the house of a man who was proved seven years before to have beaten and starved her almost to death. O, that beats all the stories that I ever heard or told.

H. L. PROZZI.

To Sir James Fellowes.

31 May, 1817.

IT is very fine, my dear Sir, and I am well persuaded on't, that your kindness for poor H. L. P. is not to be damped by climate, nor I hope diminished by distance. Yet there is no harm in the journeys being put off, though I should really like to hear what Dr. Whalley does mean by these improbable tales of starvation upon the continent.

I fancy his servants shut him up, and told him only what they wished him to hear.

The story of Eliza Davies is, however, most disgraceful to this

land of liberty and opulence. If such atrocities can be committed in London, what may not happen in Russia or even in Portugal?

We have been all engaged in care for a girl who drowned herself in our canal here, but whose only cause of concern was her inability to squeeze some rich friend out of £500; he sent her £50, but that she scorned. What is come to the people? Lunacy? One would think so, to hear these wonders.

The Dean of Winchester's account of Bennet Langton coming to town some few years after the death of Dr. Johnson, and finding no house where he was even asked to dinner, was exceedingly comical. Mr. Wilberforce dismissed him with a cold "Adieu, dear Sir, I hope we shall meet in heaven!" How capricious is the public taste! I remember when to have Langton at a man's house stamped him at once a literary character.*

Johnson's fame, meanwhile, lives even in the lightest and slightest shreds of his wit and learning.

We have a caricature print here now of Sir John Lade going through all the stages of profligate folly, and drowning himself at last, with Dr. Johnson's verses beginning

"Long expected one-and-twenty,
Lingering year, at length is flown,"

written under, exactly as I printed them in his letters to me, only I omitted the name, as a civility to the family which showed me nothing but spite after Mr. Thrale's death.

Well! I will be prudent, and recover the bruises my purse has suffered by sitting still as a mouse. Was I once at Adbury, temptations to go further would be irresistible, so I will take good advice instead of kind invitation, and keep quiet.

A glass of Bath water before dinner, or half a glass of Mr. Divie after,† will keep my inside tolerably good-humored, I hope, though dining from home is still unpleasant to me, and *la bile* is my utter aversion, —

"For that is bitter with a witness,
And kinder souls delight in sweetness," &c.

* The Earl of Norwich, who ranked as the wit of Charles the First's court, was voted a bore at the court of Charles the Second.

† Divie Robertson was a wine merchant at Bath.

Your good mother is recovering gradually but certainly. The dear Doctor is, as he terms himself, true heart of oak.

They are always the same true and partial friends to dear Sir James's ever obliged and faithful

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, Thursday, 26 June, 1817.

I CANNOT sufficiently rejoyce, my dear Sir, or be half thankful enough for the intelligence your kind, charming sister has this moment given me, of your resolution to run no further in chase of hot weather than the Queen's Drawing Room of this day. Poor Salusbury! I think if he escapes fever it is sufficient felicity. Such a journey in such a June! and the thermometer standing at 82° in my cool marble hall. I have the headache myself, caught perhaps by reading Mrs. Carter's letters, which tell of nothing else, and yet all our pale blue ladies here, are saying how fine they are. Come, there is one good thing in them: she says to Mrs. Montague:—

“Your scheme of omitting the house, and improving the plantations, is founded on a motive equally good and wise. Time would sink the proudest palace you could raise, into ruins; but eternity will secure to you the wealth which is applied in the encouragement of honest industry and relief of distress.”

I like the intention of the sentence here quoted excessively; but 't is awkwardly expressed, because masons and bricklayers want money and encouragement as much as gardeners and planters, no doubt; yet I am all of her mind, to prefer improvements on land, rather than sink sums which may be wanted, in building houses and stables, which never repay the owner and too often remain for ages —

“Remnants of things that have passed away,
Fragments of stone, reared by creatures of clay.”

Poor old Llewenev Hall! pulled down after standing 1000 years in possession of the Salusburys, made over to Lord Kirkwall's father in the last century, and now demolished by fine Mr. Hughes, of the Parys Mountain, would cure any one of pride in houses, or in ancestry.

Land is the only thing which can pretend to duration, though you see our funds keep up very finely, 'spite of ill-willers; and what a piece of work has been made with these housebreakers, and street ruffians, to convert them into gentlemen, and try them for high treason!* The Dean of Winchester says, one of the jury was penny collector to Lord C.

Here is heavenly weather, however, and if anything can put or keep people in good humor with those above them, a copious harvest is of all most likely.

You will see my fair daughters at the Drawing Room, of course. They hurried home for it I fancy, for S. has written to me, expressing her regrets at leaving Paris, "where ladies have nothing to do with *ménage de famille*, and can entertain themselves their own way." Yet I believe she has, of all women, least to regret on that side her head.

"Like a city wife or a beauty,
She has fluttered life away;
She has known no other duty
But to dress, eat, drink, and play."

This for your privacy, — as Gloster says.

Ah, dear Sir! what a loss I should have had by your journey to the Continent. I shall now not care a straw about missing Adbury this year, for there Adbury stands, and there resides its master; and like the Irish lover, who says, "Arrah my dear Sheelah (or Shalah)! if I was once within forty miles of you, I would never desire to be nearer you in all my life, and still in the same little island," when he was transported to Botany Bay.

Your dear father and mother are so well and so happy at Sidmouth, they half persuade me to go and see them there; and when all debts are paid, the £ 500 bought in again, which I sold out in March, and a certain sum *dans la poche*, who knows what may be done by dear Sir James Fellowes's ever obliged and grateful

H. L. PROZZI.

Miss Fellowes assures me this stuff shall cost you nothing, or you should have had more on't at least, by way of making out the bargain; did you care about Caraboo?

* The Thistlewood conspirators.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, 1 July, 1817.

No, my dear Sir, I will not stir from home till after the 25th of July, which day made me happy thirty-three years ago, after the suffering so many sorrows, and here will I keep its beloved anniversary, always remembering

“ St. James’s Church and St. James’s Day,
And good Mr. James that gave me away.”

Adbury will be beautiful the last week of my favorite month, and London will be empty the first week of August, so that will just suit me ; for the small shot, as we used to call trifling debts, will be all discharged by then ; my £ 500 brought back again into the three per cent consols, and myself at liberty to come and thank Sir James for his kindly repeated invitations.

The bustle we made about Caraboo * was very comical indeed. Those who thought her an imposter dared not say so. Such was the persuasion of the people to believe her a decided Oriental, though she never had the skill to write her odd characters in the Eastern manner, but beginning from the left hand clearly proved herself a novice, though she had made up a good alphabet enough, composed of Persic, Arabic, and Hebrew letters. I put my opinion of her into bad verses, as you shall see, more spiteful to Murray, who refused my book than worth your reading for any other merit ; but if you have not seen the new poem, you will not laugh as I wish you to do : —

Our bright maid of Bristol by all men admired,
Till ev’n admiration itself grows half tired ;
While praying, or swearing, or swimming, or fencing,
All merits in one happy female condensing ;
The more I examine his wonderful book,
The more I’m persuaded she’s Moore’s Lallah Rookh.
In her black cotton shawl which no heart can resist,
While the morn, like her character, melts into mist,
Addressing old Titan with tender devotion,†
Or shrinking averse from the treacherous ocean ;

* A woman of bad character, who passed herself off at Bath and Bristol as Caraboo, Princess of Jarasu.

† Caraboo pretended to worship the sun.

The ship which produced her, the swain who forsook,
 All bring to my memory Moore's Lallah Rookh.
 Should Murray once wind her, no pelf would he spare,
 Indulging her taste in each Turkish bazaar;
 The Mukratoo rabble,* O how he would scare 'em!
 And long live the lady, the light of his haram!
 The rich feast of roses he knows how to cook,
 Who gave three thousand pounds for Moore's famed "Lallah Rookh."

My dear Sir James will perceive that his old friend has not forgotten her old follies,

"Ev'n in our ashes live their wonted fires,"

as Gray says, and we go on to the last, jogging in the same dusty road.

Apropos, I don't believe London will be empty enough for me till September. I will not go to encounter invitations and parties on the one hand, slights and cold looks on the other. Everybody shall be away when I present myself at Blake's Hotel, unless, perhaps, poor Lady Kirkwall; and if she can get her annuity paid, she will put herself in some cool place, I hope, after such heating work of both body and mind.

After all, you and your family are safe in Hampshire, and summer is before us. This hay weather is bad indeed; and I did think we waited too long for the rain; we shall now have more than we want. *S' intende acqua*, says the Italian gardener, who had been praying for rain, *ma non tempesta*.

We hear that the lady, whose good-nature the little gipsey imposed upon, is so struck with her ingenuity, that she protests they shall never part again. By the same rule, Rundell and Bridge ought to make the swindler, who cheated them of £ 24,000 the other day, head clerk of their house, if they can catch him.

Would you laugh to see me in a white hat and ribbands! The black † was wholly insupportable during the violent heats, and thunder always gives me a sullen headache.

Con mille rispetti. Addio.

Yours ever truly attached,

H. L. P.

* If a man offered to touch her she cried out, Muckratoo.

† She never left off her black silk dress after the death of Piozzi.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Blake's Hotel, 23d Aug. 1817.

LONDON is most embellished since I saw it last, but the Regent's Park disappoints me: had it been as I fancied, a place appropriated to the Regent, with rangers, &c., the boundaries of London northward would have been ascertained, and a beautiful spot, like Hyde Park, have contributed to the health and ornament of the metropolis; but buildings there are, it seems, hourly increasing, and it will end in an irregular square at last, of which there are enough already. The bridges are very fine, and will make my old habitation, Southwark, a gay place in due time, I dare say.

Here is a little sunshine after the rain, and the pale white-faced wheat will be got in somehow. But no golden ears, no rich colored grain imbrowned the views in Berkshire, as I came along. The "cold unripened beauties of the North" must have a melancholy appearance to foreigners from warm climates, to whom the verdure of fields and snugness of comfortable cottages would make this year but broken amends, I am confident.

Can you tell what's good for the bite of a dead viper's tooth.* Oyl, I trust, and emollients; yet 't is a slow remedy. I feel ashamed to think how much the post-humous poyson has disturbed me. Write a word of consolation, and adieu.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Blake's Hotel, 29 August, 1817.

I HAVE been living with poor dear Lady K—— and her mother; up to their very eyes in love and law, distressed as nothing human ever was distressed, and will, I suppose (in Dr. Johnson's phrase), be at last delivered as nothing human ever was delivered. Siddons and they are the only people I have seen, but the things are charming, and the places so improved, that, without hyperbole, I actually passed through Southwark — the borough I canvassed three times, and inhabited thirteen

* Alluding to Beloe.

years — without knowing where they had carried me any more than if I had been found in Ispahan.

The gas-lights and steamboats and new bridges are all incomparable, and will serve us for chat at the castle, when your Honor has counted your money, the grand pacifier of all quarrels, although the fountain whence spring so many disputes. But adieu! I must dress to dine what I call out of town, the top house in Baker Street.* Make my best regards and sincerest good wishes acceptable to Lady F——, and believe me hers and yours while

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, 3 September, 1817.

JOY to my dear Sir James Fellowes. *Mil años y mas*, and through the whole thousand, friends to value him no less than I do.

The cock and hens will be beforehand with me, however, in my congratulations; Smith assures me they are beautiful and healthy; and were to be on their journey yesterday; when I concluded mine. We had lovely weather; a negative day as I call it,—no sun, no rain, no wind, no dust. Driving through the Devizes, I recollected an old epigram which I wrote there, some centuries ago, when Sir Fletcher Norton was—— O, but I dare say 't is in a blank leaf of your "Wraxall;" if it is not, you shall have it another day.† Meanwhile, as sublime effusions are the fashion, what think you of my verses lamenting the fate of my own sisterhood? when Bagshot, Howslow, &c., were first taken into cultivation, and beginning:—

Goosey! goosey! gander!
Whither will you wander
When your commons all are gone,
That you plumed yourselves upon?
Sure I think they'll leave no places
Where to wash our feathery faces,
All the world's become our foes
From this hurry to enclose.

* At Mrs. Siddons's.

† See *ante*, p. 232.

Could a ray of hope spring from one's
 Interest in the House of Commons,
 I'd exhaust my last poor quill
 To avert the impending ill.
 But the troop of Foxites there
 Make the mournful goose despair :
 And for t' others there 's no chance,
 While they rate their geese as swans.

But you are tired of this stuff, or at least I am : the harvest is worth talking about, and a very good harvest I now believe it will be. But to see haymaking, wheat carrying, and barley full ripe, all at once, is new ; so far as I have looked on life, and the staff of life. One newly turned up field exhibited shocks of corn on one side of it, manure on the other, the plough at work in the middle. A curious combination !

The Mount at Marlborough was too dewy in the morning, and it was quite dark when I got in over night, we had chatted so long and so comfortably : it would have been a famous thing to have run up a hill which I ran up in the year 1750, the maid calling after me, "Miss ! don't you jump over the hedges." Cardinal du Perron, you know, did purchase an estate for double the money another man would have given, because he leaped a famous leap on those grounds seventy years before ; I did not, however, understand that he could have leaped it again.*

Miss Williams is in trouble ; her beau very ill indeed, and keeps bed ; Mr. Cam attending him : by her odd account it seems Hæmorrhoids, Hæmorrhage, or some undescribable mischief. She is zealous, however, about your dairy, &c. My description of it set all her head to work. I have friends here going to Ireland : it would make your very ducks and drakes laugh to see her diligence (ill-employed) in persuading me to instruct them which way they should go ; for cheapest, best, &c. How can she multiply her cares so !! But she would think us no less absurd, for making enquiries now, A. D. 1817, concerning the Ægyptian Mary, who died in the desert beyond Jordan, in the year 430 :

* The Archbishop of Armagh, meeting the Earl of Carhampton, boasted that his legs carried him as well as ever, "Ay, my Lord, but not to the same places."

having never seen a human face for forty-seven years, living on raw roots and herbage, with no change of clothing from the dress she wore at the moment her conversion took place. She was then a notorious profligate, yet wished to attend the festival of Fête Dieu, but felt herself supernaturally repelled by the pressure of an unseen hand, and a voice crying Unworthy Mary. She retired, so warned, from the cathedral, resolved to break off all connection with a world she had behaved so ill in, and after making solemn vows of penitence, tried the church door again, which opened to her of its own accord. This apparent approval of Heaven sent Mary to perpetual solitude and sorrow; to alleviate which, in her last moments, Zosimus the hermit was sent to administer the last consolation a Christian can receive. She took the eucharist, though speechless from exhaustion, and when the hermit came next day, he found only a lifeless corpse, with the pathetic words "Poor Mary" traced in the burning sand. Has not Murillo done the story justice? Better, O better far, than the poor quill of yours and Lady Fellowes's ever,

H. L. P.*

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, September 8, 1817.

WHAT an unreasonable friend is dear Sir James Fellowes! as unreasonable as partial, I think; and that is enough. On the same day that we obtain attestations of all the Tales told in the "Golden Legend," and that will not be soon, he may expect another strange letter, just like the last, from his much obliged H. L. P. My story is abridged from a French abridgment of the old book. Authority enough, as it is not only to be found in "L'Advocat's Biography," but in Danet's "Account of Christian Antiquities." I would not, however, swear to the truth of any tale told in the dark ages. The world sees most visions (says Fuller) when she is most blind, and the ophthalmia of those days, inflamed by persecution on the one hand, and hope of immediate beatitude on the other, presented objects of strange distortion,

* Mrs. Piozzi, on her return to Bath from Adbury, where she had paid us a visit, having admired my fine picture by Murillo, sent me the above account, taken from the Popish legend. — J. F.

doubtless ; while the difficulty of committing anything to paper, multiplied and magnified every deviation into a miracle. Such are the accounts religiously believed by Romanists of St Francis retiring to the desert, making himself a wife of snow, &c., and while under these dreadful mortifications, receiving in vision, from our crucified Saviour's own immediate touch, — a separate mark or stigma, is it not ? upon each hand and foot. Your picture seems as if stretching round to touch the side of the saint, as I remember, and 't is related how his wounds dropt blood, though later than Ægyptian Mary's legend by nearly seven centuries.

Alas, the while, that such delusions were thought necessary to prop our faith, or propagate Christianity brought down from heaven by the God of Truth himself ! Romanism, however, cannot, even now, divest itself of love for pious frauds, and hatred to all sects except their own. See how they are working themselves into power ! reminding one of the old fable in our babies' books, where the poor axe lies helpless in the wood, lamenting his incapacity to serve his friends or get his own living, for want of a handle, and you (says he), cruel creatures ! won't give me even a twig. After a long time spent in such entreaties, one of the young ash (a sapling) takes compassion, "And here, my lad," he cries, "thou shalt have this branch of mine, make thee a handle ;" he does so, says the fable, and cuts down the whole grove. What else did he want it for ?

Ah ! old Sir Fletcher Norton that I wrote the epigram upon was no sapling ; no, truly, he was made of sterner stuff. But the present state of things has spoiled my epigram, like that which was drowned (as Boswell said) when the grand piece of water was made at Blenheim, and

"The arch, the height of his ambition shows,
The stream, an emblem of his bounty flows,"

was no longer a joke.

And now here is just such a letter as the last ; and in yours a confirmation of my own just surprise at your talking of partridge shooting, when such loads of corn were yet unhoused. Soon, however,

"Shall the staunch pointer brave the sultry heat,
And tread the stubble with unfeeling feet."

And till then you must carefully preserve your album of fowls immaculate. The ginger-wing will not, I hope, be hereditary ; if it is, I shall get somebody to thrust Mr. Kenrick down the throat of his own alligator, as they do infants in China. The weather is truly delightful, and good for workmen at home as for harvestmen abroad. Enjoy it, dear Sir, and never forget Lady Fellowes's and your own true servant,

H. L. P.

Do you recollect the little Simon Paap, a dwarf whom you and I went to see, and he said he would have the honor to drink a bottle with Sir James Fellowes, comically enough, and produced a tiny vial out of his pocket that he called his pocket-pistol ? He is here now, and the people go to see him. Bessy Bell was glad to shake hands with her handsome husband, I doubt not ; but as I flatter myself she has still some regard for her poor mistress, I shall beg you will not withdraw yours from her.

Farewell, and present me properly to Lady Fellowes. I am glad she likes my notion of the fine Murillo. She will be much amused with Caraboo.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, September 25, 1817.

How kind the —— have been ! never forgetting their little friend at No. 8, but sending me crouted cream, &c. They thought a little soothing would do me good, I suppose, after Mr. Beloe's venomous attack.

No matter ; here is a copious and beautiful harvest, and many happy hearts in consequence, Salusbury's beyond all. I don't know when I can recollect the barley in Wales housed by the last week in September ; and we are painting and repairing and emulating London all we can, nothing doubtful but that the second and third cities of England will soon follow the first, being paved with iron and lighted with air.

Mrs. Mostyn, for whom I was as you know anxious, is said to be well, and disposed for a journey to Italy. Those who return from thence say the English are in high favor, owing chiefly to

Lord Exmouth, whose liberation of Catholic slaves at Algiers struck the Roman people as an act worthy Christians, and scarce to be credited of British heretics.

Mr. Wanzey tells me a thing scarcely to be credited of Romish bigots; no less than that the Protestants have hired an apartment near the Colonna Trajana, where our English liturgy is read every Sunday by some of the numerous clergymen belonging to our Church, who are loitering about that city unprohibited, unnoticed, unoffended.* Such connivance who could have hoped for in 1785? Mr. W—— says that our countrymen spend £1,000 per diem in Italy,—in Rome only, if I am not mistaken.

How good and wise, meanwhile, is ——, staying at his own beautiful house, and embellishing it every hour.

I have seen the Lyons, old and young, but was surprised to witness the oddity of a female setting-dog suckling her young enemies. The whelp is not half as tame as some cubs shown at Bath last year, that played with the children of the town and with one another just like kittens. I pulled those about myself; but this little rascal was surly.

Waterloo Panorama, however, and the learned Italian dog Manito, must be visited. I think next week will have exhibited all the wonders London can produce at this time of year, and then my horses' heads will turn homewards on the first day of the new month, September.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, 8 October, 1817.

DON'T buy the book, dear Sir.† That method only propagates the mischief. You know me too well not to believe me completely callous to literary abuse. But this man (who I never saw but once in my life, eighteen years ago) tells the public that

* James Smith used to tell a story, on the authority of Sir George Beaumont, that the English applied to the Pope to bless a cemetery, so that they might lie in *consecrated* ground, and that his Holiness replied, all he could do for them was to *curse* any spot they might select for the purpose, so that they might lie in *desecrated* ground.

† The Sexagenarian, by Beloe. His statement, false in every particular, more than quadruples her Welsh rent-roll.

Mr. Piozzi pulled down my old family seat at Bachygraig, and that when he was dead I searched the Alps for a young mountaineer to inherit my estate of £4,000 per annum. Now, in the first place, Mr. Piozzi paid off a mortgage that was on the Welsh estate with £7,000 of his own money, not mine. He then repaired and beautified old Bachygraig at a great expense, rebuilt and pewed the church, made a fine vault for my ancestors, and built Brynbella to live in, because the family mansion lay down low by the river side.

He begged my name for his brother's son, and when the French invaded Italy, sent for him hither, an infant unable to walk or talk ; lived till the lad was fourteen years old, and died, never naming him in his will, but leaving all to me. Why, I must have been worse than Mr. Beloe himself, to do any other-wise than I have done.

Yes, yes, when people will talk of what they know nothing about, see what nonsense follows.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, Wednesday, 6 November, 1817.

THE Queen has driven us all completely distracted ; such a bustle Bath never witnessed before. She drinks at the pump-room, purposes going to say her prayers at the Abbey Church, and a box is making up for her at the theatre.

Your S——l W——'s life appears to affect the D——r more than I hoped it would. Women bear crosses better than men do, but they bear surprises worse. Give me time, and I'll go gravely up to the guillotine ; but set me down suddenly within view of a battle, I shall be a corpse before the first fire is over through fear, whilst my footman shall feel animation from the scene, and long to make one in the sport.

" Heres, si scires unum tua tempora mensem ;
Ut rides dum sit forsitan una dies,"

was said to men who always count upon an escape ; women provide for certainties as well as they know how.

But here's my translation, which probably I have shewn you long ago, yet I somehow think not either : —

If you thought you should live but a month, how you'd cry,
Yet you laugh though you know you to-morrow may die.

Here are worse pens and papers and handwriting than those I am always most happy to see, but the post shall not pass my door with his bell whilst I go canvassing for franks; no, indeed, and my health is quite, in the matron phrase, as well as can be expected. So adieu, and believe me yours faithfully,

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, Fryday, 28 November, 1817.

MR. ——— brought me so kind a message begging a letter, that I can't help complying.

Everybody's spirits are mending on our Queen's return. The people are running up and down again; and those who have any names — many, too, of those who have none — leave them at her Majesty's door.

To a mere spectator the appearance of things is dismal. The burst of grief* is, however, pretty well gone by; but if it was a proof of our virtue, as Mr. Grinfield said it was, why, so let it be accounted.

His assertion, indeed, that no profligate country ever regrets a prince or princess for their moral qualities, is more pleasing than strictly true. When was ancient Rome more sunk in vice than when all its inhabitants poured forth to meet and lament over the ashes of Britannicus! Their theatres about that time, too, did certainly exhibit *ballets d'actions* equal to our own; and by the accounts I hear of Covent Garden and its gay *salon*, we are even trying to go beyond them if possible.

The description brought me by a friend was so eloquent it reminded me of Milton's devils building and lighting up with gas their pandemonium: —

“ Nigh on the plain in many cells prepared,
That underneath had veins of liquid fire
Sluiced from the lake, mechanic multitudes
With wondrous art founded the massy ore,

* Occasioned by the death of the Princess Charlotte.

Severing each kind, and scummed the bullion dross.
 Others as soon had formed within the ground
 A various mould, and from the boiling cells
 By strange conveyance filled each hollow nook,
 Till sudden from the soil a fabric huge
 Rose like an exhalation. From the roof
 Pendent by subtle magic many a row
 Of starry lamps and blazing cussets, fed
 With naphtha and asphaltus, yielded light
 As from a sky." *

When I repeated the lines, he swore that Milton had invented the gas lights, and given the first draught of our grand theatres in London.

This letter I shall take to ——, so that they may put it in their pockets with a heavy load of compliments and offers of service from Sir James's oldest friend.

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, Monday, 15 December, 1817.

DR. GRAY, whose name and character you know, laments the loss of his mother, because, says he, she died so unexpectedly, — at ninety-one years old! He had left her in high health and spirits but three weeks before. Such is this world, its inhabitants, and their ideas. He has sent me his Connexions, and two sermons on the princess's death, protesting that he will or will not publish them as I approve or condemn. The subject is not treated in a commonplace manner, you may be sure, when touched by his hand. Poor princess! she has really stood like an Academy figure to be viewed in various lights. The shadows in his sketch are eminently deep and broad, an impressive Rembrandt.

Veniamo ad altro. That one friend should send me sermons to criticise, while the theatrical folks try to court me out of an epilogue, does look as if they thought I was not quite superannuated.

Of the clusters in the Pump-Room, who swarm round Queen

* Paradise Lost, Book I. The quotation is singularly happy, and is one among many instances of her knowledge and readiness.

Caroline as if she were actually the queen bee, courtiers must give you an account; of the ecclesiastical history you will soon hear a great deal, but I'm not sure whether it will interest you. Everybody writing at the same time on the same subject does no harm. The same ideas may be delivered out with attractions that may lure minds of a different make; and you will kindly rejoice that I came out alive from the Octagon Chapel, where Ryder, Bishop of Glo'ster, preached in behalf of the missionaries to a crowd such as my long life never witnessed; we were packed like seeds in a sun-flower.

At the Guildhall two days after, when pious contributors were expected to come and applaud, Archdeacon Thomas suddenly appeared, and protested against the meeting as schismatical. So he was hissed home by the serious Christians, Evangelicals as they sometimes call themselves,—half the population of Bath at any rate,—and his friends felt uneasy; till yesterday the Duke of Clarence, some say the Queen, some say both, consoled him by their particular notice. All which you will learn better from Colonel C——, who, for ought I know, presides at the presentations.

Adieu, dear Sir, with assurances of my being ever gratefully and faithfully your obliged

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, 23 January, 1818.

WHEN and in what year will the women find out that company makes one gay only as it brings out that gayety which was in the heart before? A great coat makes a man warm, I suppose, not by virtue of any warmth in the coat, but as it keeps the natural heat of the body from flying away. Yet parties are all the rage, and I shall have one next week, and put my wisdom to sleep the while.

Doctor Gibbes has been very good to me, very kind and attentive. Illness commonly catches me by the throat, you know, and makes a mute of me for a while, punishing the peccant part. In a few years those things will be made easy; Miss McEvoy

sees with her finger tips, and Miss Somebody* embroiders with her shoulder and elbow; no need of hands and arms for the old purposes, say the improvers of the world. Have you read "Frankenstein or the Modern Prometheus?" I have never seen such an audacious, and I might add, such an ingenious piece of impiety. But Faber says, you know, that the world is to end in 1866; so the old gentleman below stairs must work double tides for these next fifty years, and he has a good assistant in Mr. Hone, who is surely well paid for his work.

Meanwhile the virtuous few, as it is the fashion to call them, are instructing the poor, and keeping schools for young people in the country. Lady Williams writes me word that one of her sisters, a managing woman, who is in the habit of looking into her own affairs, took one of these instructed maidens for her cook three weeks ago. The dinners did well enough, and she went into her kitchen to say so one morning; when the whole family seemed collected round and expressing such attention in their gaping countenances, the door opened unawares to them all; and "enter the King and Laertes," cried the cook, in an attitude of recitation, her back towards the lady, whose only difficulty was to say, who was most astonished? Well, dear Sir! here is a world of nonsensical babble such as you used to like, and when you go to London (if you *do* go) you must make me amends, and tell me all about the succession, after it has been well contested in the House of Parliament. But we shall meet before then at dear No. 13, and I shall see Lady Fellowes in her new character of nurse-a-baby, and we shall have a full table and a merry day; fine weather of course *this* year, in which even the North Pole is become passable, and everything cheerful may be expected, when such mountains of ice have been thawed I think. So adieu! and continue to be the kind and partial friend, though you will not be the correspondent, of your obliged and faithful servant,

H. L. P.

* Miss Biffin.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, Monday, 2 March, 1818.

THE best joke going here is about the man who killed his wife the other day ; they printed his name Haitch, if you remember, but after he had cut his own throat, they wrote him down Mr. Aitch ; no wonder, for when the windpipe was divided, you know, how could he retain his Aspirate ?

St. David's Day has been a rough one, and your brother Dorset forces me on the reflection that it was a Saturday's moon. But what reflections or what conjectures can they form who shall lose time and space — at least the old-fashioned methods of reckoning them — by being under the pole, seeing the sun always at the same altitude, finding neither east nor west, neither latitude nor longitude, contemplating their own figures represented as in a mirror on the opposing cloud, and viewing their old acquaintance the rainbow no longer an arch but a circle ?

Will they come home pretending not to have shuddered at such appearances ? and will they feel more terror of being tittered at for speaking of such things as extraordinary ? — O yes, I dare say they will, — than wonder at the strange phenomena ! There was a time in my life when I would have been happy to have gone and come back safe as a cabin boy rather than not make one in such an expedition ; and am now actually eager to hear of their setting out, that I may have some chance of hailing their happy return. Meanwhile my health is not to be complained of ; but whenever I catch cold, my eyes suffer somewhat unusually.

This stuff is written with one candle and a green shade over it, which makes me incline to be sullen, and say what vile pens these are, when, perhaps, 't is one of the well-deserved warnings knocking at the door of dear Sir J. F.'s faithful and grateful, servant,

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, 17 March, 1818.

I AM much flattered, my dear Sir, by the fault you find with my letter being too short. Yet I'm disposed not to lengthen this unreasonably, for fear your mind should be engaged when it arrives. May that engagement prove prosperous! and let me make haste to tell you what happened to me the other day, lest you should not have leisure to laugh at it. Our Regent having sent for specimens of curious marbles to the north coast of Africa, Mr. Smith has discovered — not the marbles (one never finds what one is looking for), but a better thing — the possibility of getting at the long sought for city, on the Zaire or Congo River, which they have tried so vainly to bring to light.

I who heard of this discovery in the morning, said hastily to Captain Digby, who sat next me, "So Tombuctoo is found at last!" "Ah, ah!" says a man on the other side me, — "what was that fellow hiding for? Forgery, I suppose; and what names those scoundrels give one another with their slang, — Tom Buckle to!"

Well! and there is a ship disinterred (to use a fashionable phrase and not a bad one); for the ship has been buried in the earth many centuries no doubt, forty miles from the nearest sea, somewhere in Caffraria. *Toujours l'Afrique* (say Frenchmen), *nous aurons donc de la fricassée (l'Afrique assez)*; but those who are not in jest are of opinion that the Cape of Good Hope was once detached from the continent, an island like Terra del Fuego at Cape Horn.

"Thus do men run to and fro, and knowledge is much increased," as, says the Prophet Daniel, it will be, when this world is near its conclusion. I know not how far distant that event may be, but everything is doing, and everything is happening, that we are told will happen, and that we are sure will be done, in the concluding centuries of terrestrial existence. Yet people are in such haste to accelerate their own perdition, that a clergyman has hanged himself at the Castle and Ball this morning, — I don't know his name; and if I did, your brother D. knows that "The Wonder, or A Woman keeps a Secret," has been per-

formed with success at No 8 Gay Street, within this last fortnight. So adieu, dear Sir, and write oftener, if the letter only contains the words — Steady and all well.

The foreigners say we English ruin the uniformity of our handwriting by taking a new pen every tenth line. I say, the not doing it every time you turn the paper, makes one's letter look like a masqued figure of day and night. This is written in the dark. Farewell and be happy as is wished you by your ever, &c.,

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, 21 March, 1818.

Though my muse is grown old,
And her life-blood all cold,
Still trembling from any surprise a;
Warm congratulation,
With true admiration,
Must welcome our pretty Eliza.

Excuse this nonsense : my head is full of the laudanum I took last night, more perhaps from fear than from feel of the same nephritic affection that made me miserable this time last year. The poppy, however, which nature sows amongst the corn to show us that sleep is as necessary as bread, did its duty, and here am I, better than when R—— saw me lying on the couch yesterday evening pretty late, when he brought me the happy news. — Adieu, dear Sir. God bless you and yours, prays most fervently, Your

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, April, 1818.

WHILST I was trying to reconcile myself to the uneasy state of being wholly forgotten by dear Sir J. F., I met his excellent father in Collins's Library, looking wonderfully well; but saying you had toothache and faceache, and I don't know what beside. So I resolved to write you a long letter as the only opiate which cannot injure the nerves.

And now shall it be books or people that we talk about? Of books, let us both begin and end with Gisborne's new publication upon Natural Theology, a tiny work, but replete with good sense, sound learning, and pious reflections. I shall buy and perhaps interleave it, apropos to poor me and my quondam possessions. You see Doctor Burney, who purchased his father's portrait and dear Garrick's at my sale, now drops down dead, and the library, pictures, &c. are purchased (if my information is correct) by the British Museum!

When will the ladies be more or less strict in their manner of dressing? A genteel young clergyman in our Upper Crescent told his mamma, about ten days ago, that he had lost his heart to pretty Miss Prideaux, and that he must absolutely marry her or die! La chère mère of course replied gravely, "My dear, you have not been acquainted with the lady above a fortnight; let me recommend it to you to see more of her." "More of her!" exclaims the lad; "why, I have seen down to the fifth rib on each side already."

Will this story help to cure the toothache? It will serve to convince Captain J. F. and yourself, that as you have always acknowledged the British belles to *exceed* those of every other nation, you may now say, with truth, that they *outstrip* them.

I am very sorry to see the death of Sir Richard Musgrave in the papers. He was much my admirer forty years ago, and what was more to his credit by half, he wrote the History of the Irish Rebellion and all its horrors, a work one word of which has never yet been contradicted.* It will now obtain its due celebrity I hope, and, indeed, it ought to grace the library of your lovely country seat. Shall you go thither soon? The swallows and cuckoos will meet you in May, and I really expect a hot baking summer after all this soaking rain. Warm weather would give us a famous harvest, and your children will be delighted with the butterflies before they leave our land.

Salisbury says I must come to Brynbella and see his young plantations, animal and vegetable, next July; and if health goes no worse than it has been, I shall just hope to be no nuisance, — a difficult matter, the difference in his lady's age from mine con-

* On the contrary, it is considered a very one-sided production.

sidered. The babies will be interesting at any rate. We have a nest of babies here, — females all, I think, — to whom our old friend Matilda Hook was a complete nothing: the eldest, a small creature, taking off Mr. Kean in Shylock and King Richard, convulses every audience with delight. I am going this evening, Saturday, 25th, and shall give you an account when I come home, and then you will have a long letter instead of a good one.

Well, dear Sir! here am I come home, after being more astonished than delighted. Clara (Fisher), who played Richard III., did it extremely well. She is just such a little thing as Simon Paap, the dwarf, that you and I went to see, and I daresay is a dwarf; but 't is an amusing exhibition upon the whole. If you have seen the children in London, however, where the size of the house and the actors are so contrasted, the effect must be twice as powerful, and nothing remains to be said on the subject by your tedious correspondent and affectionate, &c.

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

6 May, 1818.

I SHALL be glad when the modish world permits you to exchange the sight of emerald trinkets for that of green fields, and lapis lazuli tables for a clear blue sky.

I grieve for Bullock, however, who first found out the quarry of Verd antique marble in our county of Anglesea. Apropos, that little island has no little to boast: three times has she ruled over the three kingdoms of nature. Once when Druidic superstition swelled every sea-breeze with her howlings, and Mona's thickly planted woods covered her cromlechs from the sight of Agricola. Once again, when destruction had laid her plains bare of timber; herds of black cattle feeding on the mountains, supplied the London markets for more than five centuries; and are mentioned in some of the coronation feasts. The present day, by this dear Bullock's ingenuity, discovered treasures of marble in her rocky bosom, and exhibits specimens of Ægyptian green not to be surpassed by anything which antiquity has bequeathed us.

I was ranting on in the same strain before Miss W—— when

she exclaimed: "Ah! roast him; is that odious Bullock dead at last, that cheated my brother, Sir John, giving him £500 for a bit of land, that to be sure *we* thought not worth £50, but which that fellow knew contained these blocks of green stone, dyed by the copper, — nothing else in the world." Well! if it was so, Anglesea is still the queen of mineral nature, in right of her mines. Venus, too, is she not? Sprung from the sea, and showing her brazen face in every part of the world.

Sir Joseph Banks will consider Bullock as a loss to all students in natural history. I am glad you attend his Sunday nights: they used to be delightful; and I hope he does not grow too much enfeebled by age, but makes them still worth your care.

You used to say how I preached the end of the world, but here was a learned Dr. Hales stood up in our pulpit at Lama, last Sunday, and said sixty-two years more would complete its duration. This was, in the modern phrase, committing himself, and the laughers all stuffed their handkerchiefs into their mouths and the man went on explaining his calculation and minding them ne'er a whit.

The actors are more easily abashed; Mr. Young looked full of distress when he saw Lady St—— tittering in the stage box at his well-played Zanga, and the beautiful girls, her daughters, counterfeiting sleep. But derision is a thing no powers, except those of piety, can endure. At her approach, wit darkens, and, as Milton says of Eve, in her presence, Wisdom's self loses discountenanced, and like Folly shews.

Those large fields of ice starve the people's hearts, and they think insensibility a merit, I suppose. Distinction it is not, for they all do it.

I did not English, or rather Anglicise, any of the mottoes, but have been long of your mind, that G. H. Glasse's is the best. He was an extraordinary man, "*le galant le plus pedant, et le pedant le plus galant, qu'on puisse voir.*" Science, which acted as a sceptre in the hand of Johnson, and was used as a club by Dr. Parr, became a lady's fan when played with by George Henry Glasse. I wish you had known them all three that you might applaud the fancy. You often do approve the odd fancies of your truly attached

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, 20 May, 1818.

My dear Sir James Fellowes's last letter was so long and so kind, that I could wish for another chat with him; did not the idea intrude of his being all engaged with these quality weddings, and that he would wish my large sheet of paper, perhaps, back in my own writing-box. Well! no matter; there are some people one never can get quit of, say the great folks, and you perceive I am one of them. Meanwhile we were making impromptu charades and nonsensical trifles the other day, when one of the company said suddenly:—

“Why is Mrs. Piozzi like a kaleidoscope?”

REPLY.

The brilliant colors that appear
Shine, like her wit, distinct and clear,
While Fancy's fleeting magic power
Combines to charm each varying hour,
Giving to trifles light as wind
The lustre of her fertile mind,
Imparting pleasure and surprise,
Delighting still our hearts and eyes.

Good-natured at least, was not it? But we have not the fine thing here, constructed by Brewster,* uniting camera obscura with the other catoptric devices. O, how I should like to see that, and the exhibition, in your company. You really should write me some account of it. This weather will bring wealth to the farmers, and felicity to the apple-vats. A Devonshire lady, Sir Stafford Northcote's wife, who knows your brother Henry, says there is promise of more cyder this year than has been known for many summers, and as to hay and wheat there can surely be no want.

The Queen's approaching death gives no concern but to the tradesmen, who want to sell their pinks and yellows I suppose; though something should be settled concerning the guardianship of her poor old husband's person. Our Demagogues are to make

* Sir David Brewster, Principal of the University of Edinburgh, &c.

a grand push for triennial parliaments, they say. People are in such haste to be happy ; they play *short* whist, *short* commerce, &c., but after all these complaints of bad harvests, I did not expect them to cry for *short commons* ; so that's one of my silly jokes. Is it a joke that Buonaparte is dying dropsical ? Ay, ay : sweetly sung the old French poet who said of such folks :—

“ Tant que la Fortune vous seconde,
 Vous êtes les maîtres du monde,
 Votre gloire nous éblouit :
 Mais au grand revers funeste
 Le masque tombe, l'homme reste,
 Et le héros s'évanouit.”

Bright with fortune's dazzling favor
 Seconding each bold endeavor,
 Warriors tame our souls to fear ;
 But reverses spoil their feigning,
 Down drops mask, the man remaining,
 While the heroes disappear.

Well ! 't is no great matter whether they are turned off the kaleidoscope or no, if we listen to Dr. Hales, the great theologian, under whose quarto volumes on Chronology, poor Upham's shelves are bending. He stood up in Mr. Grinfield's pulpit last Sunday fortnight (as, perhaps, I told you), and said confidently that the world would end that day sixty-two years. It was the anniversary of our Lord's Ascension ; and perhaps it may be so. You will find innumerable reflections on that event, in King's “*Morsels of Criticism*,” which I have loaded, if not deformed, by numberless notes, — manuscript, but legible enough, for I looked them over since Hales's sermon, as I thought they would amuse you. 'T is almost a pity you should suffer them to be sold after my death.

Sir Joseph Banks's evenings must this year be more interesting than ever, though I *do* fear the North Pole expedition will be a long time in finishing, and the people here are so desirous always to put extinguishers on their own entertainment. The ice field attached to our Ultima Thule, Fulda or Fulah, is now said to be a mere newspaper story.

Yours faithfully,

H. L. P.

Adbury must be in high beauty just now ; when do you go thither ? I hear much of an exploding mineral in Derbyshire, that is to supply our deficiency in volcanic matter ; and my curiosity is all alive about it : what mineral can they mean ?

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, June 1, 1818.

MY shamefacedness, and my desire of talking about twenty other things, kept me from showing you the verses I sent — in answer to her exaggerated compliments, and kept me too from reading you some which she made impromptu on my complaining of the loss of youth and its accompaniments, beauty, admiration, &c.

“ O talk not to me of the days that are flown ;
 Though Youth’s cheerful blossoms decline,
 Even Autumn and Winter their treasures can boast,
 While Virtue’s pure sunshine is thine.

“ In each season of life there are blessings in store,
 Then still, my dear friend, be it ours
 To rejoice in the fruit our life’s harvest may give,
 Nor repine at the loss of its flowers.”

To this I replied : —

Where Winter chills the leafless grove,
 Silent to mirth and dead to love,
 Should robin from some slippery spray
 Tune up his long-remembered lay,
 Each passenger would cheer the bird,
 In Summer’s concert scarcely heard.

When Jura’s icy mountains rise
 Let one green spot salute our eyes
 Amid the lofty glaciers lost,
 As if forgotten by the frost,
 Each Briton smiles, extends the hand,
 And cries, O charming Switzerland !

My talents thus your eyes allure
 And please, reduced to miniature ;

'Tis thus you soothe my fond regret
 For times I never can forget,
 And thus your praises, partial friend,
 Excite the spirits they commend.

Miss O'Neill will be visible here with the naked eye, as men say of a new star or comet, on the 13th June next, Saturday se'nnight. I shall make her panegyric an excuse for another letter. The first *début* on these boards is Belvidera, which I have seen Siddons play to Dimond's, Brereton's, and to Kemble's Jaffier, well recollecting how she spake and acted every passage, particularly her soft but striking "Farewell! remember Twelve!" which was sure to electrify the house; but I must say "Farewell! remember five!" which when the clock has struck, the postman will wait for no more from yours ever faithfully,

H. L. P.

To Miss Willoughby.

Monday, 15th June, 1818.

MY dear Miss Willoughby was very kind in writing so soon, but do not call me unkind in writing so late; I waited to see Miss O'Neill. She is a charming creature without doubt, and charms, as it should seem, without intending it, calling in no aid from dress, or air, or studied elegance, such as in old days one expected to find in a public professor or dramatic recitation; but like Dryden's Cleopatra,

"She casts a look so languishingly sweet,
 As if, secure of all beholders' hearts,
 Neglecting, she can take them."

Comparing such an actress with Mrs. Siddons, is like holding up a pearl of nice purity, and asking you if it is not superior to a brilliant of the first weight and water. You are fortunate in finding a cool place during these unlooked-for heats of a summer season long forgotten in our country. My house is, as you know, on the hill's side; but down in Green Park Buildings, one can't help thinking how a fairy would feel if held down at the bottom of a bowl, from which the hot punch had just been poured away.

But I am going to Wales, if these elections will have left me any untired horses. Meanwhile, our pretty friend, Mrs. Webbe,

had a very nice party some time ago, and her brother presided so kindly. I fancy he is a good sort of man, but loves a wonder; and told me the other day of a gentleman who expected to sit in the House of Peers as Earl of Huntingdon. A gay dream, I suppose; but Mrs. Fox will know if there is any truth in the tale.

Well! I do hope your favorites, the Wards, will rise in the profession. He is indefatigable; and though I felt him feeble and sinking in some parts, some scenes I mean, of that never-ending Jaffier, he sustained many scenes admirably; the one with Renault was inimitable, and 't is long, indeed, since I have seen such a beautiful Pierre as Conway. Mr. Ward is so correct, too, so never-wrong. The poet has always justice done him by a scholar-like speaker; on the whole, I was very well entertained.

Miss Stratton, one of them, is really very pretty: she went in hysterics at Belvidera's distress, so did Miss Glover. I said we should all *melt* into tears, but the joke was good for nothing, the house was no hotter (where I sate) than any other house entered of late by dear Miss Willoughby's ever faithful, humble servant,

H. L. PROZZI.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Thursday, June 18th, 1818.

It was sweetly done of you, indeed, dear Sir, to put the little warm bottle, and the warm kind invitation into your brother's pocket so. God forbid that I should outlive that quantity of Cayenne pepper, and want more!! An old Welsh squire did certainly keep on breathing till brandy was not sufficiently exciting for him without Cayenne pepper, but I think he was turned of ninety.

Well! Miss O'Neill might have moved him even then. Our ladies are all in hysterics, our gentlemen's hands quite blistered with clapping, and her stage companions worn to a thread with standing up like chairs in a children's country dance, while she alone commands the attention of such audiences as Bath never witnessed till now. The box-keepers said last night that the

numbers Kean drew after him were nothing to it. She performs every evening for seven days together; but Clifton is near, if she does break a blood-vessel or two.

A Dublin bookseller expects to end his days Earl of Upper Ossory, 't is said; and a young lieutenant of a man-of-war hopes to sit in the Upper House with the old, and to me dear, title of Huntingdon. Oh, the last earl was one of my truly partial friends! but Count Flahaut's * claim has proved of more importance than them all, by digging out this obsolete law.

Formerly, as I have read, whenever a Scotch gentleman meditated a journey southward, he used to have the crier's bell rung up and down Edinburgh for many weeks beforehand, to ascertain the parcels and packages he considered himself as bound to carry for his neighbors, and to settle the expenses, &c., but *tempora mutantur*; and Mr. Scrase told me once that he had made gentlemen's wills when they left the county of Sussex about Brighthelmstone: describing the leave-takings, &c., as if the people had been setting out for a discovery of the North Pole. Mr. Scrase was eighty-six years old when I first knew him in 1765: a man of great abilities then, and of delightful conversation. But what he most delighted to converse about, was the famous Farinelli. Indeed, of all public performers, I believe Farinelli was the only one whom no successor ever pretended to equal.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, 1st July, 1818.

THE heat has certainly exhaled my faculties, and I have but just life enough left to laugh at the fourteen taylors who, united under a flag with Liberty and Independence on it, went to vote for some of these gay fellows, I forget which; "but the motto is ill chosen," said I; "they should have written up *Measures, not Men!*"

Sir Thomas Lethbridge, however, gave in last night; O how unlikely, how impossible, was it for him to hope for a seat, who

* Count Flahaut married the only daughter of Viscount Keith by his first wife. Miss Thrale was his second, by whom he left an only daughter, the Hon. Mrs. A. J. Villiers

had sent the popular favorite, Sir Francis Burdett, to the Tower,* — I wonder he would try!

Doctor Gray says in his last kind letter, that we quarrel with no time but the present. Hope still anticipates pleasure for a future day; and those that are past, delight us by recollection. He longs to see me and Mrs. Mostyn, he says, to talk about old Streatham Park. His sisters and nieces, two old ladies and two youngish ones, are come to settle here at Bath, and he begs me to introduce them into society; but 't is the wrong time of year: I tried to make them a party for to-morrow, but cannot muster twenty faces, everybody has left town; in a week more, I shall leave it too. Wales will be quiet at least, and people expect health and pleasure from change of air, which having once delighted us, we talk of its enjoyments when no longer capable of enjoying them.

No matter! the farce must go on till the curtain drops, and if everybody left off their disguisings as they grew old, why age would appear with still more deformity than at present. Have you interested yourself concerning the discovery of Ossian's originality, so long doubted, so strenuously denied? The concatenation arose in my mind from his expressive words: — "Age is dark and unlovely, it is like the glimmering light of the moon when it shines through the broken clouds; the blast of the north is on the desolate plain, and the traveller shrinks on his journey."

I feel sometimes ready to shrink from mine to North Wales; and your good-natured brother said, he wished I should change my destination, and go no further than Sidmouth. I told him *this* was my last long frolic; and that next year (if I am to see A. D. 1819) I would try to spend the summer of it in Devonshire; and so I will.

Meanwhile you will have a stormy Session of Parliament, made still more so by the Catholic Question being brought forward. Forcing religion into the dispute, will set all in a state of effervescence; for although, poor thing, she is disregarded in com-

* He moved the committal of Sir Francis, whose language, he said, "made his hair stand on end." Excited by an ironical cheer, he added, "it really had that effect." In allusion to this unlucky declaration, he was saluted with cries of *porcupine* and encountered by pictures of that animal wherever he went during the election.

mon moments, and left like a football covered with mould and dust, give that football but a kick, and set the sport going, all the youth of the village will mix in the game, and some eyes will be beat out and some blows exchanged, before they lay the poor football to sleep under the old wall again, little as they really care for it.

Well! but you must not pay ninepence for this letter without my insertion of a joke you will like, perhaps, because it is mine; of the man who comes into a coffeehouse at Ilchester during the heat of our election contest, and asks for the news. "Ah, Lord, Sir!" replies the waiter, "we are badly off for papers. The popular candidate has got the day; the poor old 'Times' has been torn to pieces in the scuffle, a sea captain has caught up our only 'Pilot,' because he could see neither 'Sun' nor 'Star'; and no 'Courier' can be got for love or money. They are all on the road to Bath." Adieu! and don't wholly forget yours ever,

H. L. P.

I have lost a day as well as my wits I find. This is the 2d not the 1st of July. Bessy and I set out for our own country on Friday, 10th; so if you will not write soon, the direction must be Brynbella, near Denbigh, N. Wales.

To Sir James Fellowes.

No. 8 Gay Street, Tuesday Night,
15th September, 1818.

WHEN I was about seven years older than your Tommy, we had a permitted holyday: and two of my uncle, Sir L. S. Cotton's children, with poor Miss Owen and her brother, came, and one of our gambols was to dance round him or her who sat in the middle, and teize them till they quitted their post, when another took it, and underwent the same worry.

When George Cotton, however (afterwards Dean of Chester), was seated, no arts, no tricks, no force could make him move; so that Jack Owen came and whispered me: "If you'll help, we will make him jump up, stout as he is. Let you and I set fire to Mrs. Salusbury's papers here in the closet, and make a noise. George will run away I warrant you, and look foolish enough." I took the hint, and cried fire at the very top of my voice. Out

ran my mother and her company from their tea or cards, in the next room, frightened beyond all telling, "and Dear Mama, don't be angry," cried I, "it was only to get George out of his place."

Query, is Cobbet any wiser? You have finished his nonsense by now.

I have got a sort of French Thraliana: fragments of letters written by Madame ——, Louis XIV.'s brother's wife, to our Queen Caroline, grandmother to George III. of England. I can hardly unpack my trunks for the avidity I feel to read this (to many) uninteresting stuff: to me more than delightful.

Madame's account of her visit to a Female Benedictine Convent, where she saw a nun of the royal family amuse herself by shooting at a target and firing pistols at a mark, is very curious; and shows one how difficult it is to dispose of leisure hours; for this lady had very few hours indeed that by the rules of the convent she could call her own; and this was her way of getting rid of them: the most extraordinary method that ever met my eye in reading through seventy years, Time's short preface to the "Volume of Eternity."

I can add no more but that, I am, Dear Sir,

Yours and Lady Fellowes's ever obliged
and grateful and faithful,

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, Michaelmas Day, 1818,
like the 1st of May.

NOTHING kills the Queen, however. It is really a great misfortune to be kept panting for breath so, and screaming with pain by medical skill; were she a subject, I suppose, they would have released her long ago; but diseases and distresses of the human frame must lead to death at length, as the smallest brooks of the most inland country will sink in the sea at last. Sleep gave me up to his brother, says some old writer, and then

"Soles occidere et redire possunt;
Nobis cum semel occidit brevis lux,
Nox est perpetua una dormienda." — *Catullus*.

Pretty lines certainly for a heathen poet? Will these do in imitation?

The sun that sets, with light refined
Returns to gild the plains;
When man's short day has once declined
Perpetual night remains.

And recollecting that some old bishop who cured himself of the dropsy by reading "Quintus Curtius," pointed out a pleasant remedy, I sent to Upham for Coxe's newly written "Life of John Duke of Marlborough," in hopes Blenheim would do as well as the Battle of Arbela, and so it did; I am very well again, now.

The glance I gave into "Thraliana" showed me these verses, better adapted to my present age than to that in which they were written. In hope of amusing you I write them out, and pray read them to pretty Lady Fellowes:—

"J'aurai bientôt quatre-vingt ans;
Je crois qu'à cette heure il est temps
De dédaigner la vie;
Aussi je la perds sans regret,
Et je fais gaiement mon paquet,
Bon soir la compagnie.

"Lorsque d'icy je partirai,
Je ne sçais pas trop où j'irai,
Mais en Dieu je me fie:
Il ne me peut mener que bien,
Aussi je n'apprehends rien:
Bon soir la compagnie.

"J'ai goûté de tous les plaisirs,
J'ai perdu jusqu'aux désirs,
A present je m'ennuye:
Lorsqu'on n'est plus bon à rien
On se retire, et on fait bien,
Bon soir la compagnie."

And now, after a thousand repetitions of a thousand kind compliments to Lady F., and kisses to her darling babies, I shall take a thin pen, and write out my version of President Lamoignon's lines not much amplified:—

Arrived at grave and gray fourscore,
 'T is time to think on life no more ;
 Time to be gone ; and therefore I
 Can quit this world without a sigh :
 Without or sorrow, care, or fright
 Can bid the company good night.

When hence we part, 't is hard to say
 Whither we rove, or which the way ;
 But He who sent me here can show
 My doubtful footsteps where to go ;
 So trusting to His truth and might,
 I'll bid the company good night.

I've tasted here of every joy,
 But time can taste itself destroy ;
 It teizes me to see how soon
 Quite good for nothing I am grown ;
 When such the case, 't is surely right
 To bid the company good night.

Adieu ! and accept this Michaelmas goosery with your accustomed kindness for

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, Thursday, 15th October, 1818.

MY dear Sir James Fellowes, like his own western sun, delights to warm and gild the evening of a stormy day ; but I have no commissions that I remember. Divie Robinson has sent the wine, and I have sent him the money, so that's all over. When you feel your own purse too heavy, take it to Mortlocks, 290, in Oxford Street, — and carry Lady Fellowes a beautiful specimen of South Wales china, and tell *him* how I am panting for my ice pails and large dishes to use this day senninght.

The horrid story of Mr. Bowles shooting his own favorite nephew, heir to his estate, I believe, will make me shudder at a partridge all this autumn. 'T is a sad thing one cannot buy these birds like ducks and geese. But the thoughts of meeting at Mr. and Mrs. Greatheed's again, and meeting at Adbury ! O, I must not indulge such extravagant fancies, and Lady Fellowes

must not encourage them. She is too good to us all. Was the young Lady of Grey's Cliffe with the Greatheeds? No girl that ever I saw could compare with your brother's daughter for beauty and apparent intelligence at her age; but I suppose she will not maintain her superiority for twenty years; if she does, the poets will weary all readers with verses written in her praise. Apropos to poets, I think Lord Byron's "Pegasus" is moulting his wings; one hears nothing of him or his muse. Madame D'Arblay writes and comes, and cries, and goes to live at London with her son. She is very charming, — she always was; but I will never trust her more. The first time one is betrayed by semblance of friendship, may be the fault of another; the second time, 't is one's own fault; and to be twice made April fool by the same trick after ten years old, is too late.

Did you like the last volume of the "Tales of my Landlord?" I prefer a pretty novel little spoken of, called "Civilization." If I did not recommend it to Lady Fellowes, I ought to have recommended it. Dr. Whalley says 't is written by Hannah More, and the girls call it a preaching novel, and resolve not to look at a page of it. The British Museum is the thing worth seeing in London, and I missed it. English people make every curiosity so difficult of access that you may live among us half a century, and see nothing. Foreigners throw the doors open, and take no present going in or out. Our fees at palaces, and our card-money under the candlesticks, are certainly a remainder of old ill manners; nor can I reconcile to myself, or to my notions about good breeding, the trick of prescribing to our visitants the stake they shall play for in our house. I feel as well disposed to say what cap they should wear, or what ribbons they should buy. Let them buy and wear what they will.

All seem disposed to liberate Buonaparte. The dashing people, because he will make a dash; and they will like to see the old firework, after a pause, burst out in a new wheel, or throw up a showy serpent for us to stare at. The grave folks expect him to fulfil Faber's new prediction of great things yet to be accomplished by the Francic Emperor, and all consider the sovereigns as very fruitlessly employed in endeavoring to shut the Temple of Janus. Meanwhile there is an old metaphysical work, which

I cannot take pleasure in reading, published by Hartley, ancestor to David Hartley, in the year 1749. Eighty-first proposition says: "It is probable that all civil governments will soon be overturned." His eighty-second proposition has these words: "It is highly probable, and to be expected, that all Church government will in course of less than a century be completely dissolved." Nobody minded him at the moment, I suppose, except a few pens which were preparing to answer him, but his calculation must now be allowed to have been a good one. France led the fashion, and all the world is following it. Did I tell you of the conquest I made in Wales of the Bishop of St. Asaph, Luxembourg? He says now: "What is become of that little Mrs. Piozzi? who shone here among us like a meteor for a month or two, and then away; when will she return, do you know? we are very dull without her." And so they are, sure enough; no music, no cards, nor no conversation, except the petty quarrels which infest all counties distant from the metropolis, round whose central globe we roll at different distances, and Denbighshire is Saturnian in every sense of the word: their sorrows, as well as their joys, are so stupid. One would think Doctor Young had passed his life among them, when he says: —

"Without misfortunes, what calamity!
And what hostility without a foe!"

Adieu! and do not make it long, Dear Sir, before you come and cheer the hearts of Russell Street and Gay Street; and don't run away with your brother Dorset. I shall try to borrow him of his good-natured lady for my flash next Thursday, 20th, being evermore

Yours and all your family's
obliged and faithful,
H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, October 29th and 30th, 1818.

THE ravens of my dear Sir James Fellowes are pheasants: brilliant in color and tasteful to perfection. Your letter made me recollect the verses. The planting scheme enchants me. Robert shall give you account of my diligence: —

“ And as the crescent acorns swell,
 These oaks to future time shall tell,
 How friendship like themselves can shoot
 To Heaven its height, through Earth its root.”

My mind has yet some youth in it, as you say, who know it best. The battered case, however, has had some blows lately.

I am perpetually stopped in these last stages of my long journey for want of horses, and shall be late home, of course; so like all travellers, I read the tombstones in the next churchyard, and without further allegory, how the deaths do increase round one!

Miss Fellowes called on me this morning. She is in high looks, and does not perhaps entertain those apprehensions about poor dear Mamma, which *you* cannot avoid being sensible of: but do not be too selfish. People of her age cannot long be detained here: no, nor of mine either. Cowley says:—

“ It grieves me when I see what fate
 Does on the best of mortals wait,
 Poets or lovers let them be,
 ’T is neither love nor poesy
 Can arm against Death’s weakest dart
 The fertile head, or honest heart.
 For when our life in the decline
 Touches th’ inevitable line,
 In Death’s strong hand a grape-stone proves
 Fatal as thunder is in Jove’s.”

Meanwhile let us die but once, and not double the pang by cowardice, or poyson the dart by wilful sin, but meet the hour with at least as much deference to God’s will as every Turk shows to that of the Grand Signor. “It is the Sultan’s pleasure,” says he, “and so ends the matter, — here’s my head.”

I have set my acorns. ’T is the oddest thing in the world that the wind blew me an ash and a sycamore key into this little garden a year ago, and George put them in the ground, and they prospered.

So you will have a Piozzi forest some day, but take care and claim them, and let nobody but yourself get a twig; and if I live till they are old enough, they shall be marked and ticketted.

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, 1st December, 1818.

WELL ! now I will not wait for a letter from Adbury, though I do desire it above all things in the world ; for you will like to hear how the Persians * behaved at an English family dinner, and I am dying to tell dear Sir James Fellowes how much I was entertained.

It is truly astonishing to see how they have mastered our language and caught up our European manners. Men who have sate on carpets for thirty years, and eat with chopsticks, are really a little better bred than the rest of the company, manage knives, forks, and chairs with grace and propriety, and what they ought not to do (for they are Mussulmen) take their glass like an English country squire, and flirt with the girls famously. I told them, however, that —

“ The glowing dames of Persia’s royal court
Have faces flushed with more exalted charms ;
The Sun that rolls his chariot o’er their heads,
Works up more fire and color in their cheeks :
Arrived ’mong these, the prince will soon forget
Our pale unripened beauties of the North.”

Well ! I really was very ill bred myself ; studied these men all day, and turned them over like the leaves of a book, to get what information could be obtained. What pleased me best was the confirmation of my own conjecture concerning the names of Cyrus and Darius. The last means sovereign, as I always believed, and the first is synonymous with Cosroe. My fear of being mistaken ever since I gave you my “ Retrospection,” has haunted me night and day. Error is such an insinuating thing, it works through every book like water through a filtering stone. Let us go, and say with Horace : *Satis lusistis, satis bibistis, &c.* We must go, that’s certain, and ’t is the only thing that *is* cer-

* Meerza Saefar and Meerza Saulih (the two Persians mentioned in these letters), two of the most distinguished personages sent into this country three years ago by Abbas Meerza, the reigning Prince of Persia. They speak English fluently, and are quite familiar with our manners and customs, and are at no loss to defend ably their opinions. They are dressed in the costume of their country. I saw them at Bath, Nov. 29, one in a scarlet and gold pelisse, the other blue. — *J. F.* 1818.

tain. *Kai a πεθαυε* ends all the cases Dr. James quotes from your old friend Hippocrates.

Meanwhile ladies leave cards, and starving females write romances. The novel called "Marriage"* is the newest and merriest. How marriage should be a new thing, that is at least as old as Adam, the author may tell: but 't is a very comical thing, and would make Lady Fellowes laugh on a long evening.

Here is the first frost on the first day of winter: quite right. The next three months, of which this is one, ought to be drippy, slippery, nippy.

Pluviose, Nivose, Ventose: all that stuff is very prettily put together in the "Clavis Calendariæ." I wonder you never looked at mine, crowded with notes, — I would say deformed: but you would only answer Pish! The author, an Irishman, has borrowed most liberally from "Retrospection," and never said thank you, Mrs. Piozzi; but no matter, 't is a very useful book, and not unentertaining. But I must write to Dr. Gray, and thank him for his very, very kind letter. One would think I was like Sir Epicure Mammon in Ben Jonson's "Alchemist," who fancying he had found the philosopher's stone, was enumerating the felicities it would purchase, and cried out in a rapture: —

"I will have grave divines to flatter me,
Poets I will not heed."

Adieu, dear Sir, and assure yourself that, although no poet, nor grave divine, your friendship is the most valued possession of

Yours and your family's ever obliged and faithful,

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Jan. 6, 1819.

MR. MANGIN is come from Paris, and says my "Synonymes" are all the rage there; and they have got a print of me, and asked him if it was like *cette dame célèbre*.

* By Miss Ferrier. It received a high compliment from Sir Walter Scott in the preface to one of his novels. It was followed by the "Inheritance" by the same writer.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, 12 Jan. 1819.

So although dear Sir James Fellowes is screwed up, as in a vice, by bad verse and worse prosing, poor H. L. P. cannot squeeze a letter out of him. Well! so it is with Salusbury, — not a word from him either. The ladies are better correspondents by half; they will at least tell one, poor souls, how sick they are.

Meanwhile, here is my annual foolery at hand almost; it really seems but the other day since our last celebration. But

“Thus perish years, as moments from our view.

Some mourned, some loved, all lost; too many, yet too few.”

I have, however, added to my stock of ideas, since 1819 came in, the sight of a man flying on the slack rope, and of another man professedly fire-proof. I have likewise seen red snow brought from within the Polar circle, and have seen the man who witnessed a phenomenon often read of with wonder, a circular rainbow. Curiosity is supposed exclusively to belong to youth; but 't is foolish to leave this world with knowing what's done in it, especially as eternity will be past in that which is to come.

Doctor Charles Parry, who shewed me the Arctic rareties, and traced his brother's track for me on the enormous map we looked over, is very indignant at their needless haste to return home without doing their errand in any wise; though these two or three occurrences render their voyage interesting. They will certainly go again next summer, and make another visit to the new nation, who never saw ship, or even canoe, like the people predicted to Ulysses in Homer. They indeed called an oar when they saw one, a corn-van; but these poor creatures never saw corn, or encountered an enemy.

They contemplated the “Alexander” and “Isabella” long before they could believe them inanimate and worked to motion by mortals like themselves; and when, embracing the masts, they found them dead wood, they burst into a horse laugh and continued holding their sides, — our people guessed not why, but I think it was at the mistake of their reporters, who had mis-

called them male and female gyants, — and probably added some false wonders of their own; for truth is native of no clime hitherto discovered — but by Gulliver.

And now do, dear Sir James Fellowes, come home to us, — and see good mamma, who pined after you last time, sadly. You said you had two old women at Adbury, — weeder women I believe, who wanted you there. I am sure you have two old women here who want you as much, or more. The weeds of conversation weary me to death with “Dear Maam, — I hope you caught no cold at the last party; Lord bless me! how hot the rooms were! Well! I do hate hot rooms above all living things, &c., &c.”

O come back for very pity, — *reddes dulce loqui*, — and do not make me force my partner’s hand incessantly thus for a fragment of comfortable chat. The Bishop of Meath is your best substitute: he is very good-humored, and writes verses, and shews me what he has written. Apropos, poor Lady Crewe is dead, — an object of deformity! The greatest beauty of her time: at least, the most admired woman; “Whose mind kept the promise was made by her face;” as Charles Fox said and sung. But palsy shook her frame, and cancer gnawed it. Oh may such a death never reach yours and your dear family’s ever,

H. L. PIOZZI.

Farewell! remember, not 12, but 26.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, Jan. 17, 1819.

INDEED, my dear Sir, it is very comical in you to fancy my letters so superior; but as a mountebank said, who I heard haranguing the crowd upon Berwick-upon-Tweed: “People of a good taste likes my deceptions, and so says I, *despitur* ;” meaning *decipiatur* or course, wherever he had gained his classic knowledge.

Our fire-eaters continue their tricks, and are said to get a great deal of money. That they do really and *bona fide* swallow boyling oyl into their stomachs and arsenic, eating a good supper and sleeping sound afterwards — who can believe? There must

be a quick substitution affected by legerdemain of a glass *without* poyson, for the glass we see *with* poyson; just at the moment *Ma'amselle* prepares in appearance to receive its contents down her throat.

As new a thing, though not as strange perhaps, was exhibited the other day by and before Lords and Commons, themselves convened in Parliament, without either King or Chancellor, but, *substitution* again. And now for the Catholick Question justly so called, for its consequences will be *universal*, and you will find the most difficult question possible decided by mere prejudice, not investigation. The Romanists, I see, expect a very favorable issue to their cause, which will come on, we are told, soon as the petitions are decided. But you would rather hear about the red snow, and I would rather tell about it.

What Doctor Charles Parry showed me was preserved in very large transparent phials, hermetically sealed. It was blood-red, and I saw a little sediment. Did it? Oh no! did it fall red from the clouds? said I. "We cannot tell," was the reply. "My brother saw no snow fall while he was in that district, but he gathered what he gave me — not from the surface, but at two feet deep in the drifts. It lay at least four or five feet on the earth, and was of the same color down at the very bottom." They saw white snow in plenty upon the distant glaciers. The wise men in the ships attributed the sanguinary hue to aerolite stones which fall in large quantities; and the new discovered Esquimaux (for Esquimaux they are) make knives and saws such as they *do* make, poor creatures, of this sky-dropt iron, having no other metal of any sort or kind. I was talking to your brother Dorset concerning the astonishment of our late-found northern friends, at seeing the "Isabella" and "Alexander" with their attendant boats; and observed how well Dryden must have studied human nature when he gave his beautiful description of Cortez's first arrival in Mexico. "O," said he, "write to James and remind him of the excellent adaptation you have made; the lines are little known." Here 't is then:—

"We went, obedient, Sir, to your command,
To view the utmost limits of the land,
To that sea shore where no more world is found,
But foaming billows breaking on the ground;

There for a while my eyes no objects met
 But distant skies that in the ocean set,
 Or low-hung clouds that dipt themselves in rain
 To shake their fleeces on the earth again.
 At last, as far as I could cast my eyes
 Upon the sea, somewhat methought did rise
 Like bluish mists, which, still appearing more,
 Took dreadful shapes, and moved towards the shore.'

'What shapes did these new wonders represent?'

'More strange than all your wonder can invent:
 The object I could first distinctly view,
 Were tall straight trees that o'er the waters flew:
 Wings on their sides instead of leaves did grow,
 Which gathered all the breath the winds could blow:
 And while their bodies cut the yielding seas,
 Low at their feet lay floating palaces.'

'Came they alive or dead upon our shore?'

'Alas! they lived too sure; I heard them roar.
 They turn'd their sides, and to each other spoke;
 I saw their words break forth in fire and smoke,
 Sure 't is their voice that thunders from on high,
 Or these the younger brothers of the sky.
 Deaf with the noise, I took my hasty flight,
 No mortal courage could endure the sight.'

It is, as your brother observed, very remarkable that the idea of a savage should thus have possessed a court poet; but besides the exquisite beauty of Dryden's Virgilian diction, there is a truth as to the sentiment, that fills one's soul with wonder at the comprehensiveness of such a mind. Ay, ay, when pyramids crumble to dust, like the bodies of kings they were meant to cover, good poetry and power of language will remain; till well-written inscriptions shall outlast their monuments. But I am growing enthusiastic, and feel glad the paper is so near full that I may be forced to leave off. Whenever dear Piozzi caught me ranting in this manner, he used to say — "*Ah, ha, vien l'estro adesso.*" So adieu!

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, 9 Feb. 1819.

If anything could give astringency to my ink, and make me write a constrained letter to dear Sir James Fellowes, it would

be the feel of my mind with regard to your late situation, and the feel of my own mouth, which has been so uneasy to me, that fears of carcinoma haunted me three days and nights at least, while the silence I was obliged to use became no character but that of your Algerine mutes, that strangle and say nothing.

Common sense at least suggested that it was only relaxation,—so I used your white stuff, and honey of roses ; and now

“ My mouth praises God with joyful lips.”

O anything, sweet heaven, but a cancer. I should then indeed have to follow my angelic mother — *cheu ! non passibus equis* — down the last dark and slippery hill.

If, however, the passage was unpleasant to your mamma and mine, what will become of these strange creatures whose indefinable sins pollute the page of every newspaper ?

What a universal styptic is gold, if a bold hæmorrhage of truth does chance to burst out ! O, well and wisely said Sir Robert Walpole, that everything had its price.* Why this colonel is like Sir Edward Mortimer in the “ Iron Chest.”

But here is a pamphlet come out, I guess not by whom written,† called “ Historic Doubts concerning Buonaparte : ” you must give it a reading. It has at least the grace of novelty to recommend it, and will, I dare say, run rapidly through many editions,—’t is so cheap.

So here is a real commonplace letter like everybody’s letter, written among perpetual knocks at the door by people who know not how to dispose of the hours between breakfast and the moments when they may without self-condemnation pretend impatience for dinner, better than by throwing a few of them away upon dear Sir James Fellowes’s ever obliged and faithful

H. L. P.

In the midst of all this I find my paper full, and wonder when I found time to fill it ; but my pen, like a horse at Newmarket, moves most swiftly when it carries least weight — ’t is plain.

* What Sir Robert Walpole is commonly reported to have said was, “ All men have their price.” What he really said was, “ All *these* men have their price,” alluding to the so-called patriots of the Opposition.

† By Dr. Whately, the present Archbishop of Dublin.

Adieu then, and remember me to kind Lady Fellowes and lovely Mariuccia, for so we should call her in Italy.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, 25 Feb. 1819.

THE languor you describe as possessing your mind, my dear Sir, while it urges you to restless activity of body, no one can better understand than myself, who used to walk incessantly, squeezing the flag-stones of our South Parade here with my *feet* in order to obtain relief for my *head*, when struggling against "Thick-coming fancies that robbed me of my rest." Well, 't is a foolish thing ever to be uneasy at all.

Our longest life is but a little short parenthesis in the broad page of time, which is itself a mere preface or prologue to eternity. Let us, however, write the brief period neatly, and leave our visiting ticket to the world such as may not disgrace us.

I have asked for St. David's Day, and we will have a good dinner and a Welsh harp.

Mrs. Stratton says she would give us authors, actors, &c., a merry day at her house, but that if she did, it must be "un table fort libre mais peu de couverts," as she keeps no professed cook. Never mind, replied H. L. P., we care only for the salt.

When all is over, I will tell you how it ended; meanwhile the best Bath news is that good old General Leighton is now become Sir Baldwin, with three or four additional thousands a year. You remember old General Leighton; he stooped excessively from a cold caught bivouacking somewhere in our service. He is a true Salopian, who, though well acquainted with both hemispheres, delights in talking only of Shrewsbury. He will now end his life where it began, nine miles from his favorite spot, — a pretty spot enough, but its power over a soldier of fortune like General Leighton, or a full-minded man like my friend the first Dr. Burney, — is really to its credit.

When the last-named friend had occasion to kiss his Majesty's hand two or three times within two or three years, I remember the wags saying, "Why Burney takes the King's hand sure for Shrewsbury brawn, he puts it so often to his lips."

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, March 13, 1819.

THE salt you get, dear Sir, must be all out of the old salt-cellar, with the cypher of H. L. P. upon it. Our gay dinner is not to be held till the 19th of this month, next Fryday, at Mrs. Stratton's. I shall then invite the company to my own house on some day when Warde and Conway are disengaged.

Your dinner shall be a good one; for you remember Boileau's epigram on just such a feast:—

“ Damis ! vous donnez la famine,
Votre table a trop peu de plats ;
Peu content de votre repas,
Enseignez moi donc où on dine.”

Too few good dishes is a fault,
Bad too many without salt ;
Among your other *bons mots*, pray
Tell me where we dine to-day.

But here we are chatting and laughing, and in comes your brother Dorset to tell me and he wished me to take charge of his Ariadne, but my room will not hold her. It came into my head as he was talking, that the deserted ladies, who cannot get their lovers to marry them after promises, &c., all follow her classical example, and make alliance with Bacchus as soon as their Theseus is gone; at least, I see some who are doing so here at Bath, and I suppose Divie Robertson, the wine-merchant, would be glad they were still more in number.

Dear me ! how sick, how thrice sick, am I of these parties ! so falsely called society : for one idea in common with them I possess not. Yet one must live among people one cannot care about, in order to serve those who really amuse and delight one.

Mr. Warde will, through Miss Willoughby's interest and mine, produce a gallant show of hands to-night, to use an election phrase. Did I ever tell you an old joke of Garrick's, when I sat in his lap at the celebration of our peace with France, signed at Aix-la-Chapelle ? in the year—what was it ? 1748, I think. “A bad peace surely,” said our favorite actor, “that brings so

many heads to the scaffold." He did not like my reminding him of his saying so, because it made him look old. But here comes company and here come beggars. I have not five minutes nor five guineas left, they plague me so : —

All considering me as their prey
All assisting towards my decay.

I was near escaping them yesterday by choking myself at dinner, but only a very little soreness remains ; and with what wits I have left in my head let me protect myself.

Yours, &c.,

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, Day of the Vernal Equinox, 1819.

I CAN now tell you that Mrs. Stratton's dinner went off delightfully : the salt shining and spar-like, unbruised, unbasketed, very good indeed. I wish mine may be as good and brilliant next Fryday, the 26th, when my very best dependence will be on you, my ever best friend. We must sit down, though, as near to five o'clock as possible, because of Sir Walter James, who hates to dine later, and who has begged himself in with a condescendence I little expected.

You and he will find Warde most of a scholar, Conway the man of high polish, general knowledge, and best natural abilities. If you don't like them, it will vex me.

Apropos to authors, actors, &c., I have had an offer since I wrote last, not of marriage, — as Ninon de l'Enclos boasted when touching her eightieth year, — but of a better thing, money for Murphy's portrait. The rich Mr. Taylor, George Watson Taylor, who bought Johnson's picture and Baretti's at the sale, solicits it with beg and pray. He once offered me, if you remember, £157 for it, so I can't, in honor or conscience, ask him more ; but if he would take my Cypriani Magdalen, who is eating her head off at old Wilson's European Museum, along with Mr. Murphy's head by Reynolds, and give me £200 for both together, the bargain would be very good for both of us, and I should take a good wide step towards buying the £6,000 which dear Piozzi left to his relations in Italy, and which I always have promised Salus-

bury to make up for him in the Consols three per cent, after which transaction my money is my own; and whatever I may feel disposed to give or spend, it shall be without self-reproach. There are £5,000 in now, you know.

Your friends, the Greatheeds, have had a famous acquisition made to their fortune by death of this Mr. Collyear. I wish it might drive them to Bath; for if I recollect rightly, you said they were once more restored to chearful endurance of that life their son's death made a scourge to them.

My friends the Mangins — who were kind to me when you were, and in whose welfare I take the tenderest concern — have suffered from the danger of their little boy as much almost as could be inflicted; and though my life has been so drawn into length, and so many scenes of sorrow have crossed my path, I am yet to learn whether the death of a young man like Bertie Greatheed, or that of a promising baby, strikes deepest; bursting a bubble with all its colors varying each to a tint more lovely than the last, does certainly require religious fortitude to support.

Yet what is infant life *but* a bubble? *

Poor Salusbury and his wife are hanging over the couch of their second son, I understand, and the thought throws a gloom over your

H. L. P.

Come on Fryday 26th, next Fryday, and disperse my cares away.

Do you remember Milton's solemn invitation to a man to be merry with him? —

"This day deep thoughts resolve with me to drench
In mirth, that after no repenting draws;
Let Euclid rest, and Archimedes pause,
And what the Swede intends, and what the French.
To measure life learn we betimes, and know
Toward solid good what leads the nearest way,
For other things mild heaven a time ordains,
And disapproves that care, though wise in show,
That with superfluous burden loads the day,
And when God sends a cheerful hour, refrains."

* "Ere sin could blight or sorrow fade,
Death came with timely care,
The op'ning bud to heaven convey'd,
And bade it blossom there." — *Lowth.*

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, Monday, March 28th, 1819.

MY dear Sir J. F. sometimes says, when he has a mind to make me very happy, Your last letter was the best I ever received from you, Mrs. Piozzi. 'Tis my turn now.

Your last letter is the very best I ever read from the hand I have long looked to for substantial friendship. It assures me of your remaining at hand, not, as many would say, to save my worne out frame from death, but to protect my remains, — the poor remains of the Piozzi; her never forfeited honor, and secondly, at an unmeasurable distance, her literary fame: to ascertain the possibility likewise of passionate love, subsisting with uncontaminated conduct, and enthusiastic friendship without prospect of interested gratification. *Veniamo ad altro.*

The last series of those half novels, half romance things, called "Tales of My Landlord," are dying off apace; but if their author gets money, he will not care about the rest; * having never owned his work, no celebrity can be lost, nor no venture can injure him. 'Tis thus Joanna Baillie might have done. I well remember when her plays upon the "Passions" first came out, with a metaphysical preface. All the world wondered and stared at me, who pronounced them the work of a woman, although the remark was made every day and everywhere that it was a masculine performance. No sooner, however, did an unknown girl own the work, than the value so fell, her booksellers complained they could not get themselves paid for what they did, nor did their merits ever again swell the throat of public applause. So fares it with *nous autres*, who expose ourselves to the shifts of malice or the breath of caprice.

My justly admired Conway meanwhile drives all before him at Birmingham, after ill usage enough here at Bath; and now I tell him, he must beware the tryals of prosperity. May no others ever assail you, dear Sir!

* This was not the first time the same reproach was gratuitously levelled at the author —

"Let others rack their meagre brains for hire,
Enough for Genius if itself inspire."

Doctor Gibbes was here five minutes ago, laughing at these liver cases,* — so everything is called now : —

“ Whence this distress of head ?
 Whence comes my nose so red ?
 Our doctors all have said
 From liver.

“ Why all this heat of skin ?
 Why so much pain within ?
 What makes me get so thin ?
 My liver.

“ Why gout in feet and toes ?
 Carbuncles on my nose,
 When all this only shows
 'T is liver.

“ Miss Rosa has a pimple
 Where once she had a dimple,
 And she believes, O simple !
 'T is liver.

“ Why, my torn frame to tease,
 Bites of bugs, gnats, and fleas ?
 All these excrescences
 Come from my liver.”

These are not my verses, — Dieu m'en garde ; but they are very comical, and would, as Mr. Piozzi used to say, make the very chickens laugh. If they amuse Lady F. in her present state for five minutes, they are five good stanzas. So adieu ! and believe me ever her's and your's, while

H. L. PIOZZI.

Doctor Gibbes's mother, seven years younger than me, is struck with palsy, which has taken away much of her articulation. Friends, companions, contemporaries. Ah, poor Floretta !

* It was the fashion to call all doubtful or undefinable complaints *liver*, as it is now the fashion to attribute them to suppressed gout.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, 30th March, 1819.

My dear Sir James Fellowes will kindly rejoyce to hear that Mr. Watson Taylor has already paid in the 200*l.* to Hammersley's: a letter from Pall Mall informs me so this moment. I must pack Murphy's portrait up very nicely to send off.

How you did laugh at my funny story of original painting! * But the conversation between you and Mr. Wickens concerning your school-days, led me to it; and my bag of tales, alias bagatelles, never seems exhausted when in pleasant company. The string ties tight round the neck of the sack, if I don't like my companions, and that of its own accord, and the people are left wondering why any one should fancy that Mrs. Piozzi is agreeable.

It is astonishing how soon irony or allegory may be mistaken for truth; I mean in how few years. Epsom Wells were fashionable early in the last century; but some people there disoblige Doctor Radcliffe, "O," said he, "I will put a toad in their well presently," meaning he would bring the water into *disrepute*, I trust; but going to Epsom a few summers ago, a lady told me very seriously, that Doctor Radcliffe had ruined that fine well by putting a *toad in it*.

Did I ever tell you that Sir Walter James was the person who first suggested to me the idea of making a Lyford Redivivus, and teaching all the people what their Christian names meant? It certainly was so, and he recollected our conversation on the subject, when reminded of it the other day at No. 8. I shall show him the manuscript some morning.

The celebrated Dr. Farmer as a man particularly well informed on the subject of old English literature and as a man of learn-

* Sir James Fellowes's note on this letter is: "I had met Mr. Wickens a few days before at Mrs. Piozzi's. As we were brother Rugbees, the conversation took place about the mode of punishing the boys in Dr. James's time, when Mrs. P. related the story of Vandyke, who, when a boy, first evinced his genius in a remarkable manner by painting the exact likeness of the master upon the person of a schoolfellow about to be flogged, which so astonished and amused the pedagogue that he burst out a laughing, and excused the boy the punishment that awaited him. Mrs. Piozzi's manner and humor in relating this anecdote of Vandyke was remarkably comical."

ing, was master of Emanuel College at Cambridge when I became acquainted with him as an undergraduate of Peter House; at a dinner party toasts were called for, and most of the men present gave the names of ladies whose names chanced to begin with the letter B. Dr. Farmer made the following impromptu:—

“Is it not strange that Cupid should decree
That all our favorites should begin with B?
How shall we solve this paradox of ours?
The bee flies always to the sweetest flowers.”

Once more adieu, and twenty times more adieu!

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, Monday, 5 April, 1819.

. Mr. Taylor wrote me a fine coaxing letter, sent by a man who came to pack and carry, and to bring me a request that I would authorize Wilson to give him up my beautiful Magdalene. I sent him the annexed, unsealed, and enclosed it in this billet to Taylor:

“Mrs Piozzi despatches her writ of authority to the European Museum, with many compliments to Mr. Taylor, and wishes him joy of his pictures. A sort of low-spirited feel hinders her saying any more now, but she really means on some future day to pay her personal respects in Harley Street.

“Mrs. Piozzi sends compliments to her old friend, Mr. Wilson, begs he will put her fine portrait of Mrs. Rainsford in the character of a Magdalen safely into the hands of George Watson Taylor, Esq., who has at length courted her out of it, and of what she parts from with more reluctance, her famous portrait of Arthur Murphy by Sir Joshua. They will, however, be where they ought to be. Mrs. Piozzi thought Mr. Taylor would have left Murphy till *she* too was where she ought to be, but he was not willing to wait till the last of the old coterie dropt into the grave which has devoured so many of them. Mr. Wilson is to consider this note as authority to deliver the Cipriani Magdalen into his hands, from his faithful servant, &c.,

“H. L. PIOZZI.”

Now do not you, my dear Sir James Fellowes, fancy me superannuated, because I do not write neatly as usual. The paper is, I think, actual blotting-paper, such as "Retrospection" is printed on exactly, and so thin. Your idea of Pan among the bacchanals (Devil among a bag of nails) is incomparable. 'T is the only solution of so strange a sign; and Scaliger says that his Satanic Majesty, when visible to his adorers, commonly does assume the port and person of Azazel, Hebrew for the goat.

You must not suffer my Scaligerana to go into any hands but your own; 't is covered with marginal notes, a single small 8vo, or rather 12mo, volume. He wrote his thoughts in French and Latin, but ever classically, ever acutely exprest. What he says of the God Pan is confirmed every day now we are so well acquainted with the Hindoo superstition. They certainly worship the scapegoat of Hebrew ritual; and Milton, who was ignorant of nothing that could be known in his day, alludes to him under the name of Azazel, who unfurls the standard of Lucifer in the first book of "Paradise Lost." Pan is employed too, but I cannot find him; his comprehensive apellation is a Greek word for all I know. The Orientals we are living amongst consider him merely as generative power: the conservative and destructive intelligences form their triad of Brahma, Vistnou, and Mahadeva, in unison with the Hebrew Azazel; and I think the Rabbins believe the seducer of Eve was either Azazel or Sammàel; the latter, probably, as he combined best with the serpent-nature; and he too is worshipt, you know, under the name of Cneph; and there were Ophites among the Greeks, for Homer's Menelaus has a serpent on his shield, probably because he was devoted to the demon Deity adored under that form; and the creatures that destroyed Laocoön were superhuman we remember.

I used to be fond of mythological studies, but have neglected them of late, unless casually reminded. Damascius, however, says *Zōvoi* meant the serpent which girds the globe; the Zodiac, I trust, or ecliptic line denoting the sun's path. Sun worshippers were serpent worshippers, Ophites; and this being a serpentine line, the line of beauty and perfection, confirms the fancy. Zone is a girdle still. The Globe, Wing, and Serpent are now become common ornaments; and when I saw a fine mirror once so

adorned at the house of a rich clergyman, and explained them to him, he stared like a thing astonished ; but you will be tired, and so am I, the implements are so bad with which I profess myself ever faithfully and gratefully yours,

H. L. P.

Make my proper — that means my best — regards to dear Lady Fellowes.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, April 10, 1819.

BUT a strange thing, and not much less comical, is the solicitude Lady Burdett and her family have evinced, of making acquaintance with me. I guess not where the inducement can lie, for of me they know nothing but my avowed aversion to their principles. It would, however, be ridiculous to refuse, so I shall dine with them on Thursday next. The rest of the week will be past at the theatre, where Shakespeare's most agreeable characters are exhibited ; Fauconbridge and Marc Antony, for which my favorite Conway seems to have been born.

Did I ever shew you a horrible story of my own writing (*ante*, p. 268) done upon the spur of the moment, for a wager, at Florence ? Lord bless me ! that hideous tale of the Modern Prometheus was done, it seems, by Miss Godwin, in some spirit of competition between her and some physician * — nobody says who — and Lord Byron. His "Vampyre" is a filthy and a fearful thing, but her "Frankenstein" carries away the palm of horror and impiety. What times are these ! The growth of crime is beyond all telling ; "It lames report to follow it," as Shakespear says, "and undoes description to do it." I suppose the warm weather, and our prosperous state of finance, are in fault. Indigence does certainly check many vices, which opulence brings out. The snake of man's plant, like that of the dung-hill, lies torpid during winter ; a hot summer day unwreaths his folds, till frost fixes him once more in a torpid state. Ross's account of the crimson cliffs would have been very entertaining had we

* Polidori, the author of the popular story of "The Vampire," which is based on Lord Byron's.

not anticipated the whole in conversation at Charles Parry's, who permitted me to see his bottle of red snow, and the Greenland-er's jacket, with drawings of those wild creatures the new-found nation teems with. They are much below the people that Drake found; who were so seized with wonder at the music made by a scraper from on board the ship, that one man thrust an arrow in his leg, not doubting but that melody could cure it. These half-starved animals minded no fidler, but sought to break the instrument, like babies. I fear the new adventurers will miss them. They certainly do lie out of the proper track.

Adieu! to-morrow's post may bring me news from Adbury: till then, and ever, farewell.

Mr. Watson Taylor was in such a hurry,* and my desire of £200 was so impetuous! Well! as the old prologue written by Prior says, " 'Tis best repenting in a coach and six." So I shall die rich, if that is any comfort, and I shall die the sooner, too (which is a good thing), if I get neither the dear Pellegrins, or the dear No. 1. Adieu, then, once more, and make ——, like young Edward Mangin, acknowledge a true friend in the portrait of

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Sunday Night, 18 April, 1819.

WHAT a world! or rather what inhabitants of a beautiful place in which our study is to make deep ruts for each other to stumble in. And you not enraged at these sedition-mongers that we read of? What would the foolish creatures have? Let government be constructed how it will — we must be governed; or the strong will press down the weak. Make up your mess like Venice treacle, a dram of this, a scruple of that, — but government must govern when it *is* made up; for after all you only take from one department, — kings, lords, commons, and the mob, to give a little more, or a little less, to the others. Limited monarchy, limited aristocracy, we understand; but limited government is a contradiction in terms.

Ah me! we shall have a grand inundation of worse than

* To buy her portrait of Murphy, by Reynolds.

nonsense, I see plainly. After the Nile's overflow, you remember, the old Egyptians turned in droves of swine, to root, and trample, and wallow in the mud; nor till the ensuing year was it observed, that their endeavors had fertilized the soil they sought to ruin.*

I shall not live to see the end of all; and if after a powerful fermentation, some pure spirit does at length come over the helm, it will be for you, not me, to praise its purity. Meanwhile, I do not in any wise resemble the old Cavalier, who predicted return of royalty, when Cromwell had just destroyed it; and a republican friend reproached him with, "Ah, Sir! you Tories are always building castles in the air." "Why where the plague *should* we build them?" said the other, "when you Whigs have got all our *land* from us."

But here's enough for to-night; my spirits were running over with joy about my picture, or I could not have gone so far. I waked very early, far from well this morning, and forbore to go to church; but as all my droppers-in agreed that I looked beautifully well, 't were pity to contradict them; and since the stocks are falling, for me to complete my purchase, when Newton and when Elliott pay their money, I will make matters up with myself, though your friend Bertie Greatheed used to say, when we lived in habits of intimacy, "Dear Mrs. Piozzi's never so agreeable as when she is heartily vexed." And I trust you found it so, too, since the fancy that you took for my conversation on the first day of the year 1815, was certainly kindled in a most ragged and tindery state of my poor worne-out soul. Well! all's over, and if I wait longer than to-morrow morning before I claim my prize, let me lose it!

Adieu, and keep sweetest Maria from wit and learning as long as ever you can; for though Floretta did resolve to hold fast both to the end, you may recollect that one had been a burden, the other a plague, to her through long protracted life. Mine has been rendered really very comfortable by your continued kindness and partiality to your much obliged

H. L. P.

* Burke overlooked this when he denounced the "swinish multitude."

To Sir James Fellowes.

Tuesday, April 27, 1819.

MY DEAR SIR, — I am in possession of nothing ; nothing, at least, that I value, except Tudor's opinion of our good Dr. Fellowes's case, which will perhaps bring him to Bath three or four days sooner. His proud Salopian tenants have no taste to parting with the last ornament of their drawing-room ; so I will keep possession of my temper, and wait sullenly, but civilly, till the 3d of May.

Dr. Gibbes says he is hurried to death, the people are so ill ; he saw me half in hysterics at Young's *King Lear*, and he came the next morning to feel my pulse, kind creature ! "But you profess to like my chat," said I, "and never come to make me a nice long visit." "Just for the same reason," replied he, "that I never drink claret, — I have not time to sit down to it." Did I tell you what a flattering letter I received the other day from Mr. Comber, who wrote the pretty verses Miss Williams did so rave about ?

"Tell me no more of Ninon's wondrous charms,
Which on life's verge, set kings and courts in arms ;
Piozzi's sparkling wit and brilliant fire
All hearts can charm, and dulness self inspire :
Long may the spirit animate the clay !
When severed from it, rise to endless day."

I do not, however, mean to tell only what verses I receive ; here are some, no better than these, which I have written, expressive of the indignation I feel to see our theatrical managers here sacrificing my favorite actor to Mr. Warde's ill-humor. You remember Martial's epigram : —

"Rumpitur invidiâ quidam, carissime Juli,
Quod me Roma legit rumpitur invidiâ.
Rumpitur invidiâ quod turba semper in omni
Monstramur digito, rumpitur invidiâ.
Rumpitur invidiâ quod sum jucundus amicis,
Quod conviva frequens, rumpitur invidiâ.
Rumpitur invidiâ quod amamur, quodque probamur
Rumpitur quisquis — rumpitur invidiâ."

The word swelling is more elegant in English, however, than bursting, ain't it? so I turned the whole as follows, alluding to their orations; for both of which see Shakespeare's Julius Cæsar, which they plaid (*sic*) so admirably:—

Swelling with envy, Brutus now appears,
Because the town lends Anthony their ears.
Swelling with envy views his pers'nal graces
When girls point handsome Conway as he passes.
Swelling with envy, sees him in retreat
At gay thirteen perhaps;—or number eight.
Such as so swell, would sting too, if they durst,
But since they swell with envy—let them burst.

Well! envy is a vice, say the "Synonymes," and theft is a crime. The increase in both is marvellous; ay, and portentous too, if we speak seriously; but no wonder, while the words "Office for the Deist," stare boldly in each passenger's face who treads the Strand; and books against the Trinity are publicly advertised, even by those we call ministerial papers. Yes, yes, you may do as you please with people at Quarter Sessions, &c., but it is only medicating the stream, while an enemy has already poisoned the source,—and *that won't do*. We may as well expect fine grapes from the Upas-tree.

My dear Sir James Fellowes asks me for commands. I have none; his talk, his shadow, and his medicine, comprise all that is wanted by his much obliged servant,

H. L. P.

Make my best compliments to all the dear coterie.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Tuesday, May 4th, 1819.

CONGRATULATE me, dear Sir; I have got my picture, and every visitant that has dropt in to-day has seen me jumping round it for joy; Miss Williams most delighted among them. The likeness strikes every one. O, I stewed the Shropshire leeks down to nice Welsh pottage at last, and they were wondrous kind. The master of the house, poor fellow! screaming with gout. Tell the young ladies they must find out this French enigma:—

Enfant de l'art, enfant de la nature,
 Sans prolonger la vie j'empêche de mourir ;
 Plus je suis vrai, plus je suis imposteur,
 Et je deviens plus jeune à force de vieillir.

Art's offspring, whom nature delights here to foster,
 Can death's dart defy, though not lengthen life's stage ;
 Most correct at the moment when most an impostor,
 Still fresh'ning in youth, as advancing in age.

I have got a new book lent me, not new either, but very interesting. The "Letters of Lady Hartford and Lady Pomfret," written at the beginning of last century. They are very pretty, so pretty that I think I must burn them, lest you should prefer them to mine, as Cleopatra drowned Mariamna's picture, lest Mark Antony should think it handsomer than her. The best of the collection are signed H. L. P. however, Henrietta Louisa Pomfret, so that must be my consolation.

Kind Conway has promised me a proof mezzo tinto of his likeness in the character of Jaffier, by Harlowe ; he says yours by Pellegrini is alive with resemblance. What will Salusbury say when he comes first to dinner at aunt's house ? who he considers as a superannuated old goose, while she is petted and flattered, and fed with soft dedication, all day long.

The Catholick question is too serious a subject for light correspondents like me, so I shall say nothing about it this year ; and if I were to see another year, it would be too late.

My fête for the end of January, 1820, will be splendid indeed ; I have asked people from all parts of the world, and some have promised from the farthest Thule.

I dare say Parry's Arctic Expedition will be more entertaining than that of Captain Ross ; but my heart bleeds for the loss of Jack Sacheuse the Eskimaux. It was so foolish to let the poor creature burn up his inside with spirits, and that was all that destroyed him. Adieu.

H. L. P.

To Miss Fellowes.

13 June, 1819.

My dear Miss Fellowes, when she reads that beautiful panegyrick on Mrs. Siddons, will readily acquiesce in her old friend

H. L. Piozzi's decision ; that she is indeed the brilliant diamond of that interesting profession, of which Miss O'Neill is the elegant and pleasing pearl. Conway asks me if we are all here seized with the O'Neill fever? My reply was, that he need not fear what a sprig of jessamine could do towards turning our brains, while under the dominion of himself, the towering tulip : this, in allusion to a sale of those flowers in the beginning of last century, when the root of one, called *Semper Augustus* (his own name) sold for £700.*

Meanwhile Siddons must stand for the moss Provence rose ; which, when her colors are confessedly faded and her bloom gone by, still yields a sweet perfume, and her dried leaves are sought for to give scent to royal cabinets.

I'm going to the Marquis —. Good night, dearest Madam !

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, Fryday, 18 June, 1819.

No need to try distant countries now for a sight of les beaux Restes de l'Antiquité. We have them in Russell Street, and in such numbers that I am informed they actually incommode each other. Before my desired visit to dear Adbury, they shall display their beauties to my sight, for 't is a dull thing not to know what lies so near one.

The thought of your going abroad in search of novelty lowers my spirits when I think of it, yet I believe you will go too ; and it will not be a right thing to do, because the departure of every wise and reflecting mind will be a national loss when vice and folly make their final stand, as soon they will do. Let the sun shine and the harvest come in copiously ; that hour may be deferred, but it is not distant ; and you have a post to maintain. While you read this you say, Ay, ay, she would have a loss, and

* See a note to "Retrospection," 2d vol., 8th chapter. In this note she states that the collection sold for £9,000, and in the margin she has written: "When the folly revived again, it was cured by a painter's daughter producing her tulip at the Florists' Feast, with the long-desired, vainly (till that day) hoped-for streak. She won the prize, and told the secret: she had painted it. The flowers were exhibited under glasses."

so she wants to make me believe I should be missed at Court. Not so.

My literary character, to-day perhaps of some small trifling import to the shallow stream of prattle, would then be driven down by the torrent of talk ; and poor H. L. P. wrecked in the storm's first fury.

What a letter ! but if one ever should prove the unworthy subject of conversation, 't is better he told truth of, than lyes. Dear Mr. Mangin said to me last week, that his mother saw me once at the theatre sparkling in diamonds, the winter of 1764. "She wrote it down," said he, "when she came home, observing how beautiful you were." "I never possessed a diamond in my life," was my reply, "never was in a theatre from my first wedding-day till my daughter born in 1764 went with me ; and never was considered through the early periods of my life as even tolerably pretty."

Adieu, and continue your kind partiality, disregarding the fabulous history of yours ever,

H. L. P.

The person Mrs. Mangin saw was Polly Hart, Mr. Thrale's mistress, whose picture he wore on his box, &c.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, Tuesday, 6th July, 1819.

MY DEAR SIR, — The Doctor and Miss Fellowes, who I met yesterday dining at the Lutwyches, told me I might send a letter to you by him, and my heart feels glad of the opportunity. Samuel Lysons's death — a famous antiquarian, and keeper of the records in the Tower — lowers my spirits a little ; not from tenderness, though 't is shocking to me that a young man should die so suddenly, but because he had an odd humor of collecting things other people would wish annihilated ; and I remember his making a breakfast for the Greatheeds, Kembles, and Mr. Piozzi and me once, many years ago, when he oddly pointed to some shelf in his chambers, crying, "There, there they are ; I gathered up every paper, every nonsense that was written against you at the time of your marriage ; everything to ridicule either of you

that could be found, and there they are." "Thank you," said I, and the conversation changed.

As we went home, I recollect John Kemble saying, "Lysons made it his business to come and tell him every disagreeable thing he could think on concerning himself; every ballad, every satirical criticism he could hear of." What a taste! and now he is dead, one cannot help feeling *feels* about it.

But his brother Daniel is a cool-headed man and has children, and will not like making enemies — will he? *

I am half and but half uneasy, — pacify my nerves, dear Sir, with assurances of your care, that no harm shall come to your ever obliged and faithful

H. L. PIOZZI.

Love to the dear ladies, and good wishes for a young and beautiful beau.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, Wednesday, 7th July, 1819.

THE valorous fellows in the North are very noisy indeed, and exhibit Milton's meeting of rebellious spirits with too much exactness; but all this gas, literal and figurative, is as likely to do mischief as good, and will take fire with a spark in an instant.

Mr. John Dimond told me just now that Covent Garden Theatre had escaped blazing almost by miracle. The head of the retort flying off, the whole space under the stage was rendered suddenly combustible; and had not the man who approached with a light, had the wit to throw that light behind him, the whole would have consumed directly.†

Gala on my eightieth birthday.

When I return home I shall calculate whether I can get to dear Adbury, and thence to London.

* I have examined the collections in question, and am convinced that Mrs. Piozzi was mistaken when she wrote this letter, which is quite irreconcilable with her frequently expressed esteem for both of the brothers.

† It was on this occasion that the stage manager came forward to beg the audience not to be afraid of fire, as he could drown the pit in five minutes.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Weston-super-Mare, 27 August, 1819.

I FEEL delighted, dear Sir, that you have not forgotten me. Some ladies that I met upon the sands last night said Sir James Fellowes had mentioned my name at gay and fashionable Bognor. This little place is neither gay nor fashionable, yet full as an egg, insipid as the white on 't, and dear as an egg o' penny. I inquired for books; there were but two in the town was the reply, a Bible and a Paradise Lost. They were the best, however. No market; but I don't care about that. When Miss Burney asked Omiah, the savage, if he should like to go back to Otaheite, "Yes, Miss," said he; "no mutton there, no coach, no dish of tea, no pretty Miss Horneck; good air, good sea, and *very good dog*. I happy at Otaheite." My taste and his are similar.

The breezes here are most salubrious; no land nearer than North America, when we look down the channel; and 't is said that Sebastian Cabot used to stand where I sit now, and meditate his future discoveries of Newfoundland. Who would be living at Bath now? the bottom of the town a stew-pot, the top a gridiron, and London in a state of defence or preparation for attack, or some strange situation, while poor little Weston is free from alarms, on Juvenal's principle *Cantabit vacuus coram latrone viator*. I offered a cheque on Hammersley at the hotel here. "Yes, Madame, by all means," says the landlady; "but pray who is the gentleman? does he reside in Bath? or is he a Bristol merchant?" Our banker little dreamed that such questions could be asked concerning him; and indeed it reminded me of the character in Congreve, who when spoken to of Epictetus, inquired whether he was really a French cook, or only one who wrote out particular receipts.

Miss W——, everybody tells me, is breaking up very fast, but some must come into the world, and some must go out on 't, while it lasts. The comet is gone by without hurting anybody, and when Mr. Hunt's voice is stopt by a rope, there are those who believe we shall be quiet — and so we may, perhaps — at Manchester.

We have swarms of babies here, and some bathe good-

humoredly enough, while others scream and shriek as if they were going to execution. Bessy's boy is among them, completely hydrophobous.

I am going on a water-party next Monday with a very agreeable young man, Mr. Rogers. There are few people here that I know; one lady, however, challenged me as an acquaintance of her brother's just seventy years ago, when he was a little boy at Weston's school, and used to come home for holidays with Sir Robert Salusbury Cotton, father of this Lord Combermere, to our house in Jermyn Street, now part of Blake's Hotel.

Adieu, dear Sir, *portez vous bien*. Present me to Lady Fellowes, and tell your children they have an humble and an attached servant in

H. L. PIOZZI.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Weston-super-Mare,
Tuesday, 21 September, 1819.

I OWE you a long letter, and my dear Sir James Fellowes knows that I am always desirous to balance my accounts, how much more when the sun is in Libra! It is indeed an especial mercy that I should be above ground cracking jokes, and making quibbles at fourscore years old; and the people do make such a wonder of me, that by and by they will deceive me into a marvellous good opinion of myself.

My fearlessness in the water attracts the women to the rocks, where it seems such fine sport to see Mrs. Piozzi swim. Poor H. L. P.! she will certainly end in a fish, an odd fish; but 't is long since any could have said of her, *Mulier formosa supernè*.

Mr. Thrane used to teach Lady Keith with a frog in a large basin, and be so rough with her if she alleged terror, that we swam in our own defence, for he swore he would follow with a horse-whip if we dug a hole in the water, as he justly called it. Dear — will follow us without any threatenings. She can scarcely fail of being a beautiful woman. Shall we wish her to be a wit, after reading the story of Floretta and the epitaph on my mother? When I said, "Why did you name her person before her mind, Doctor Johnson?" "Just because everybody can

judge of the one, and hardly anybody can judge of the other," was the truly wise reply.

Hayley and I were never friends, you know; Lady Sophronia's character and that of Dr. Rumble in some of his never-read writings, only lost our good-will, and got no admiration from any one. The epigram on him and Miss Seward were among the things Sammy Lysons used to read with a world of humor. I much wonder what became of that man's literary gleanings. Dear Conway's kind offer of buying them instantly for me, should they be set for sale, would have won my heart if he had not gained it before; but I hope the danger is over now.

Meanwhile I was right in saying that such small knaveries or follies will merge in the grand knavery of these Russells* and Burdetts, who really should be more careful than they are of their own interest; and when they are galvanizing the otherwise inert populace, should mind and not exert too strong a power, as the modern phraseology terms it. The monstrous engine they are by steam and vapor raising against Government will fall upon and crush us all under its weight. Sin in Milton acted as they do precisely, for —

" She opened; but to shut
 Excelled her power: the gates wide open stood,
 That with expanded wings a bannered host
 Under spread ensigns marching, might pass through
 With horse and chariots ranked in loose array:
 So wide they stood, and like a furnace-mouth
 Cast forth redounding smoke and ruddy flame.
 Before their eyes in sudden view appear
 The secrets of the hoary deep — a dark
 Illimitable ocean — without bound,
 Without dimension, where length, breadth, and height,
 And time, and place are lost."

Fools! teaching, as you say, English boys to sing *Oa ira!* when they don't know nor can guess what it means. They do know, however, what it means to deny their Redeemer's divinity, and find out how Jesus Christ was only an honest man; yet some of them, of these horrid Unitarians, do believe that he will come to judge the world too. I guess not why, but suppose they settle

* Alluding to Lord John Russell's and Sir Francis Burdett's advocacy of Reform in Parliament.

it on the old classic system of Minos, who put his chancellor's seal in commission, did not he? and called Rhadamanthus and Æacus to his assistance on great occasions. O, they are a precious set, certainly.

We had a gentleman here yesterday who attracted much notice. He was young and handsome, had ten lovely children, most of them females, by a beautiful lady, who, being of this new persuasion, seduced her husband to own her opinions, and half break the heart of his good father, the learned and pious Sir Abraham Elton, eighty-six years old. Well, a Mr. Rogers was telling me all this yester-morning, and added that young Elton was a fine actor once in private theatricals, but that he was a serious man now, forbore to play at cards, or dance, or see a play; and was supposed to write Hunt's speeches for him, and send essays to the office in London where Deism and French philosophy are taught, under direction of Mr. Carlisle: but O, what was my sense of horror at 5 o'clock the same dreadful yesterday, to hear that this man was raving round the town in fruitless pursuit of his two sons, — one fourteen, the other sixteen years of age, both good swimmers, — both certainly and irrecoverably drowned; the mother saved from suicide only by the immediate intervention of a medical man, a Welshman, a Mr. Price. To-day they have left the place.

My plan is to walk and bathe, and enjoy the salutary breezes of poor little Weston, and then home to my nest at No. 8 Gay Street; no London or Adbury this year. When returned home, I shall call on your Divie Robertson for a double portion of his fine wine, because the Salusburys of Brynbella will come to me at Christmas.

Adieu! I have scarce room to say how faithful a servant you and your fair lady and dear babies possess in their and your ever obliged and grateful

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

No. 8 Gay St., Bath,
Sunday, 24 Oct. 1819.

CONGRATULATE me, dear Sir James Fellowes, on my return from a place where, as I told you, the name of Hammersley was

unknown. They said if he was a Bath shopkeeper or Bristol merchant, they would take his drafts, not else: so far behind Denbigh or St. Asaph. They had, however, heard of Mr. Carlisle,* and were not sure but he was right, for there were many opinions. Mine is, that Lord Byron's book (Cain) will do more mischief than his; and you see there is a cheap edition advertised, in order to disseminate the poyson. Why, the yellow-fever is not half as mischievous. You are sadly wanted in Spain just now. A lady told me since I came home that the plague was wanted here to thin our numbers and correct our vices. Were ever such opinions broached before? were ever such ideas of right and wrong entertained in this country till now? I certainly have lived long and never heard them. Lord Fitzwilliam's dismissal † fills every mouth.

Why, we shall be divided soon, like the Hebrew alphabet, into radicals and serviles. But here comes Sir Henry and Lady Baynton, and a boy that was just born when I saw him last, now an elegant lad, — *bien manière*, — and so like his pretty mamma, I quite admired him. Mercy on me! how the generations of mortal man do spring up! to dance the dance of life from top to bottom of the long room.

“ The three black Graces, Law, Physick, and Divinity,
Walk hand in hand along the Strand and dance *La Poule* ;
Trade leaves her counter, Alma her latinity,
Proud and vain with Mr. Paine to go to school.
Should you want advice at law, you 'll little gain by asking it:
Your lawyer's not at Westminster, he is busy *Pas de Basquing* it.
Should you wish a tooth to lose and run to Wayte for drawing it,
He can't possibly attend — he's *Demi Queue de Chat*' ing it:
Run, neighbor, run: all London is quadrilling it,
While order and sobriety dance *Dos-à-dos*.”

These are clever Mr. Smith's clever verses, the man who wrote the Rejected Addresses, and were sent me by one of the fashionables.

They are making bonfires of Bibles in the North, I'm told, but your great folio in three monstrous volumes will escape I hope. The Reformers shall burn *me* before they fall upon that;

* The publisher of Paine's " Age of Reason " and other infidel works.

† From the lord-lieutenancy of Yorkshire.

there is no talk of their disturbing Bath with their Reformation.

I hear wondrous tales of Doctor and Mrs. Whalley; half the town saying he is the party aggrieved, and the other half lamenting the lady's fate. Two wiseacres sure, old acquaintances of forty years' standing, and both past seventy years old!

The Salusburys come to me on the 20th of December: we will set about quadrilling it the last week in January, when you and your lady will surely do honor and give grace to the eightieth birthday of dear Sir James Fellowes's ever obliged friend and true servant,

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Bath, Monday, 17 Jan. 1820.

YOUR wonderful friend, my dear Sir James Fellowes, will be most wonderfully disappointed if she cannot boast your appearance at her last concert, &c.; her last foolery! such a foolery! but you will come, and so will Lady Fellowes, and your sister is sure of it, and so is your H. L. P. The frost breaks gently, and I hope when spring returns, we shall have compensation for this cruel Siberian winter. It has killed the poor half-crazy lady that our friend Miss Williams lived with; she died last night suddenly of the cramp in her stomach, and I know not how the brother and Miss Williams will manage, either to part or live together; because the sister was a sunk fence, you know, and if they do not marry or separate, why the people will cry ha! ha! Well, 't is a blest thing to be fourscore, and I would not be younger for the world I am going to quit. My health and spirits are good, and my friends are very good to me, and I can be as kind to them as I please, — defying scandal and the "Morning Post."

These verses were brought me to-day. Mr. Mant, who wrote them, heard some uninvited lady exclaim, "Lord! will this Mrs. Piozzi never have done singing and dancing!" he instantly replied: —

"Sweet Puritans! don't frown severe
On dear Piozzi's dance and cheer;

Groaning beneath your loads of sin,
 She does not bid *you* enter in ;
 But mindful of youth's happy day,
 When innocence was glad and gay
 (Now well assured that joy alone
 Can to the pure of heart be known),
 She bids the ignorant of wrong
 Her dance attend — a jovial throng ;
 And friends long-loved she calls to see
 The scenes of liveliness and glee.
 Nor least will they that gladness prize
 Who only come to sympathize :
 Induced by arguments so weighty,
 She dares to give a ball at eighty."

Well, verses are fine things, and

Praises are pretty things, 't is true :
 Yet, to a well-turned mind, the pain
 Of making them, indeed, our due,
 Is the best pleasure we can gain.

And I would rather see how my book stands at Hammersley's than any poetry of my own or my neighbors. People of letters are never people of figures, it is said ; yet I have always been taught that two and two make four ; and when it appears that they make only *three*, I feel very nervous and very cross. We have got a new actress to supply the loss of Miss O'Neill — I like her best in a room though. Adieu ! and hasten to Bath, as Mr. Piozzi used to say — *non c'e tempo da perdere* — if you would wish to see untorn to pieces for cards of admission, yours and your dear family's ever grateful and faithful

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Tuesday Evening, April 4th, 1820.

. The fête was a long-promised foolery, and can never happen again, and did do exactly what I meant it should ; it procured me the power of making Conway's benefit equal to Warde's, notwithstanding Miss Wroughton's party, &c. He has left our town and our stage now, and I shall trouble my head no more with

theatrical affairs, except to remunerate charming Mr. Loder's loyalty, who would not be seduced from my orchestra to that of Mr. Ashe; let ladies, and beauties, and pecuniary inducements go which way they would. *Au reste*, your sister says she is bilious, and must go to Cheltenham. I feel very sorry, but the dear doctor's constitution seconds him through all acts of heroism. He was screaming with gout to-day; gout in his foot, the roughest and most regular fit he has experienced these seven years. The torture of all those horrid operations, he swears, was nothing of pain to what he now suffers: so true is it that God Almighty does not trust the rod of reproof out of his own hand, nor suffer mortals to inflict upon each other, what natural illnesses, gout, stone, and the pangs of parturition impose on us all every day in the course of nature. I am glad it is so; for our new masters, *le peuple souverain*, would, I fear, prove rough dispensers of punishment, and kind behavior does not seem to excite the courtesy expected by those who so willingly make that Row-Tow to Messrs. Hunt, Cobbet, and Co., which they scorned to bestow on the Emperor of China.

Well! kings are out of fashion certainly, but queens are in. The Hymenoptera of Linnæus included all animals that possessed stings, I am told; and if George IV. delights in study of reptiles and insects, he may soon be master of the subject. A popular government suits best where there is thin population. Spain will do well enough under an oligarchy of the great nobles, besides that your old friends the Castilians will wish to be under the rule and sway of Hidalgos, whether King or Cortes; indeed, I wish them success, and think Ferdinand will have more leisure to embroider trimmings for the Blessed Virgin's petticoat when relieved from the cares of state.

What did they do with Godoy? did they strip him of his ill-gotten wealth? I either never heard, or have forgotten. A young lad, nephew to Miss Williams, who has been some years abroad for his health, says the whole Continent is even yet warm in its passion for Buonaparte, whose return they still hope to hail in due time:—

Thyrsis when he left me swore
In the spring he would return;

What then means that violet flower?
 Or the bud that decks the thorn?
 'T was the lark that upward sprung,
 'T was the nightingale that sung.
 Idle notes untimely green,
 Why such unavailing haste?
 Summer suns and skies serene
 Prove not always winter past.
 Ease my fears, my doubt remove,
 Spare the honor of my love.

REPLY.

Thyrsis will return no more,
 Simple maid, expect him not;
 Ere the autumn well was o'er
 Were his summer vows forgot:
 But since wintry snows and rain
 Not a trace of them remain.
 Cease repining, simple maid!
 Thorns may blossom, birds may sing
 Love's a flower when once decayed
 Knows of no returning spring.
 Haste, and seek another swain,
 Trust; and be deceived again.

You have heard how the Duke of Marlborough was received here with hoots and hisses, and the arrest of his carriage and horses. Lord Charles Churchill who attended scarcely could protect him, and he ran for refuge to a rich half-crazy lady in the Crescent, from whence he came to a poor half-superannuated lady, No. 8 Gay Street, who he called his earliest friend, said how kind I had been to him when a sick little boy at Streatham, fifty years ago; how I had given him a little Shetland pony to ride, and so I did sure enough, but had forgotten it. Poor wretched man! We dine together to-day. The weather is not amiss, as it appears, only a want of rain. Adieu! make my best attentions acceptable to Lady Fellowes and Mrs. Dorset and Mrs. J. Fellowes from, dear Sir, your ever obliged and grateful and faithful

H. L. P.

This moment brings me an agreeable letter from Mrs. Mostyn.

She and her youngest son are very gay at Florence, acting English plays, &c. all among lord and lady performers of course.

To Sir James Fellowes.

13 April, 1820.

My dear Sir James Fellowes is but too partial to me, and to my letters: the verses are not mine, but certainly very pretty. Mr. Eckersall amazed me with the assurance of our Court's having been solicited by that of Austria to give the violet more room to grow; better say at once, Let the man out, a vigorous bag fox for Europe to hunt down another day. Rebellion, not ill-organized within our island, and growing discontents about the queen, &c., are too cold for our present taste of horrors. We long for lawful bloodshed; war and property tax, a battle in every newspaper, an enriched commissary in every fashionable street, like a country squire we once knew, who could not taste his brandy latterly, without it was warmed, he said, by Cayenne pepper.

Miss Fellowes is not well, and fancies Cheltenham will mend her. The Lapland winter we have endured has chilled the vital principle in many. My Oxfordshire tenant wishes, no doubt, it had effected the same purpose in me. I can never get my money from that fellow without help of an attorney, which I dislike as expensive, or a quickening letter from Lord Keith, which I detest as offensive, because he once, if you remember, contested the property, and I hate making Chinese Row-Tow to the man for what is no favor.

Are not the Radicals in Scotland gay fellows to attack the military *sabre à la main*? Dear me! when a rebellion not better organized, or very, very little better, made head against the reigning family in the year 1745, people laid down knife and fork, and began to pray, or to run, or to fight on one side or other. We are now so improved in philosophy that we do not even lay down our cards, or make the hanging up nineteen prisoners of war — within 300 miles of the Capital — any part of our conversation.

I am glad meanwhile that you intend to act as magistrate in

these strange times. It were to be wished that the clergy might be exempted from that duty. They are enough hated as it is, and some one told me that the bishops were hooted and hissed going to a fine London dinner, I forget at whose house.

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

No. 36 Royal Crescent, Clifton, near Bristol,
Tuesday, 27 June, 1820.

LORD, Sir! what heats are these? natural, civil, political: a conflagration of men's minds will make them tindery as your ship two hours before it took fire, and make all ready for a general burning. This place and weather are really very like Naples, and my face now is tanned like one of their biscuits. I recollect no such season since I spent mine at Exmouth. Dear Piozzi left me there a fortnight, while he went to London, and lived with Archdeacon Hamilton. My employment was to make up my "Journey Book" for the press; my amusements, to send him love-letters and verses, among which these come most readily to my mind:—

I think I've worked exceeding hard
To finish five score pages;
I send you this upon a card
In hopes you'll pay my wages.
The servants all get drunk and mad,
This heat their blood enrages;
But your return will make us glad—
That hope our care assuages.
To feel more fondness we defy
All nations and all ages;
And quite prefer your company
To all the seven sages.
Then pr'ythee come, O, haste away
And lengthen not your stages;
We then will sing and dance and play
And quit awhile our cages.

The plural number was used because Mrs. Mostyn, then a child, was with me.

The heat was intense, I remember, and when he returned, we ran to see the lyons of the neighborhood, Plymouth, Powderham, Castle and Mount Edgecumbe. I think 't is exactly thirty years ago, when I was amused by the ill-timed eulogium pronounced by a vulgar fellow on Shenstone's Leasowes. We were going over the Terrace with a heap of wonder-seers, just such a hot day as this is, at Lord Edgecumbe's : a man showing off the prospect, &c. "Ay, Sir," says a rich-looking inhabitant of Highgate or Hampstead, "it is very fine, sure, considering how far we are from London, but my wife likes a tower, and we always does go somewhere, seeing our pockets is pretty warm, ha, ha, ha ! and so last year we goes to her relations at Hales Owen, and there I saw a sweet place, — did not us, lovey ? with an inland prospect, such as I can see with my eyes, not a good sight either, — and river fish."

"Why," says dear Sir James Fellowes, "you are just like the man you laugh at, Mrs. Piozzi. To be telling old stories now, when everybody is thinking, at least talking, of the Queen." Perhaps so, but I am ill provided with argument *pour ou contre*, and feel towards a general topic, as a pretty woman feels towards a general mourning if black does not become her complexion. So here I sit crying —

" All-conquering heat, oh, intermit thy wrath,
And on my throbbing temples, potent thus,
Beam not so fierce."

But, at eighty-one years old, pride should be burned out, and shall be. I will set in the West, and find some sea-beaten shore to forget the fallacious world in. Three weeks more in this lovely spot will, I trust, suffice ; and then, as the Irish lady said, I may take lave of the company without an apology.

Wherever I am, you, dear Sir, will be sure to hear of yours and your family's

Faithful as obliged,

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

No. 36 Royal Crescent, Clifton,
Sunday, 16 July, 1820.

"NOTHING so dull as a consolatory letter," says some pert wit of the last age. True; but this need not be dull for that reason, as it will not try to obtrude insipid consolation. Lord Gwydir is dead, and I am very sorry; happiest that we were no better acquainted, for then I should have been more sorry at his loss.

I saw — expected the stroke, though shrinking from it: and yet, without death, toils, virtues, hopes would make but one chimera. I will go wait for mine at the Land's End, a proper place enough, if bordering on the ocean of eternity. This place adds to the small but strong threads that fasten one to life; it is so beautiful. The situation so like Naples; the view so like that from Brynbella, but too expensive.

I will go feed on fish and chickens at Penzance, and if I ever should come back to the living world again, will hasten through dear Adbury to see if she who is now queen regnant, despotic over the minds of multitudes, will have used her arbitrary power mildly, or set your metropolis o' fire, as she doubtless could to-morrow, if she chose it. "There is a tide, however, in the affairs of men," as Shakespear says, and if she misses it, must take the consequences. Thais carried a brand to Persepolis on less provocation, and Phryne delighted in building up the walls of Thebes, which Alexander destroyed. We must learn the lady's disposition before we pronounce on the future. The present is tremendous, to be sure. Salusbury talked of visiting me in Cornwall, but will, I fancy, let that alone, as he will not find the derivation an exact one: Corno Wallia, horn of abundance to Wales. If I save any money, I will spend it on myself, doing my own way.

Mrs. Pennington lives here, and is most hospitably kind to me. What a proof of the mutability of taste does this little district exhibit! When she married from Streatham Park, where we passed much time together, Mr. Pennington was master of ceremonies at the Hot Wells, and considered his post as worth £400 o' year. The place is now deserted, a spot for hospitals or national

schools ; and their house, with five elegant rooms on a floor, a perfect and positive incumbrance, such as they can neither let nor sell. Sidmouth, too, where I remember she ran with her mother one summer, afforded quite incomparable lodging and boarding for them and their maid : one guinea only o' week. A gentleman told me just now, he paid seven pounds o' week for a house there.

Let me find a letter directed to Post-office, Penzance, and tell me dear Maria is never sick like Salusbury's children ; which, however, do not die, thank God ! but battle their way, as it appears, through dreadful illnesses, — or they dream so. O, if we knew what babies coming into the world were born to see and suffer, with what different looks should we contemplate their growing beauties ! but the distant hills always look soft and fair, not rough and rocky as on nearer approach. May your younglings be happy, and yourself, dear Sir, as happy as is wished you by her, who will ever retain a grateful sense of that partial good opinion which is the boast of poor

H. L. P.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Penzance, 12 August, 1820.

"How happy is the blameless vestal's lot,
The world forgetting, by the world forgot!"

says old H. L. Piozzi at eighty-one, and dear Sir James Fellowes, as he well may, laughing at her ; but any antiquated joke is better than too long and too seriously to lament, as I fear our dear-loved Doctor does, the common fate of humanity in poor Lord Gwydir. Whatever we lose in this world we cannot very long be sorrowing for. My life, and that of your excellent father, though drawn out to such uncommon length, are but as points imperceptible as this, in the folio-page of eternity, to which we are approaching like the second-hand upon a stop-watch, that moves round while we look off and on again.

"Yea, but all this did I know before," say you ; "it would be better tell about Penzance."

The only place I know but little of. Why then Penzance, if

I'm to live another fourscore years and rival old Harry Jenkins, will be to me what Minorca is to Dr. F——, a place of recollection for cheap living, and the best eating possible. Red mullets large and beautiful, 4*d.* o' piece; pipers and dories, herrings almost for carrying home. Kid, as in the Tyrolese Alps, where we ate it, you know, stuck with rosemary; and mutton exactly like that in North Wales, small, fat, and tender. Now for the negative catalogue. No conversation, no circulating library, no rooms for purpose of assembling to dance, chat, or play at cards; no theatre, no music meeting, no pictures, and what is stranger far, no picturesque, the bay alone excepted. For the country — Churchill might have looked south as well as north when he exclaimed, —

“Far as the eye can reach no tree was seen,
Earth, clad in russet, scorned the living green.”

Oh! 't is a melancholy place for talking folks. Botanists, however, may justly delight in it. Every wretched habitation has a garden, perfumed by carnations and redolent of sweets from many a foreign shrub whose name I know not; for the whole place is in itself a sun-trap; and if they cultivated vines here, here they would grow. They are, however, occupied, and skilled too, I believe, in underground acquisitions. Mining is both the business and pleasure of people here; and while it does seem as if earth's surface at this time teemed with events capable of arresting attention, our Cornish neighbors set up a geological school, and spend what intellect they have on feltzspar and quartz; little heeding whether Paris is burned by incendiaries, or Spain torn in pieces by a civil war; whether condemnation or acquittal of a conspicuous princess endangers the safety of our own metropolis, or whether old Rome is to be destroyed at last by her own hands, avoiding threatened ills from foreign power, and expiring, as her scorpions do, by suicide.

Dear Mrs. Siddons, when I lived much with her and with the Kembles, used to say my principal characteristic was candor, giving the good and bad in every description of people and of things. I hope ill-fortune, ill-health, or ill-humor have not yet spoiled me for “an honest chronicler” like my countryman, Griffith, who in Shakespear's Henry VIII. gives an account of Cardinal Wolsey's death and conduct, balancing the good and evil.

'Tis really no bad thing now to possess my much-praised memory, for books here are none, and I left mine ("Thraliana" with them) in the good ship "Happy Return," bound for Penzance, in the Cumberland Bason, Bristol, with our cook, plate, linen, clothes, tea, wine, every earthly thing on board, three long weeks ago; nay, four, by the time my friends at Adbury receive this letter from a distant region.

Write to me, dear Sir James, O, pray write for pity on a poor creature starving for intellectual food, in danger of repletion from too much corporeal. Bessy has made herself sick with crab, a downright cholera, and Lord! how I was frightened; but we have a good physician, Dr. Forbes, and the danger is all over.

Adieu. Did we not once, in the little room, New King Street, agree that nothing but the consciousness of having done right could comfort solitary moments? But alas! your honor's fine Bible, in three vols. folio, is even now tossing on the ocean. I would it were come to console yours and your father's and your brothers', and dear, dear Fellie's everlastingly obliged

H. L. PROZZI.

To Miss Willoughby.

Penzance, Fryday, 25 August, 1820.

FRANK or no frank, I rejoyce to see the handwriting of dear Miss Willoughby in this distant region to which I have condemned myself for a long portion of my short life. As I have lived, however, eighty-one years next January, I may exist on to April and May, if it should so please God; and then no fear but of my too great haste to join the living world again in a quiet way, for overgrown society is as great a burden, — nay, greater to me, — than solitude. At your age, however, it is not only pleasant but proper that somewhat of life should be learned, and you were fortunate in finding London gay and communicative. Doctor Johnson said that after the full flow of London conversation, every place was a blank; I wonder what he would have thought of dull Penzance? We had a Spenceiana in our hands at Streatham Park while he was writing the Poets' Lives; and

when I borrowed the *Anecdotes* at Bath, there was little quite new, but it seemed to me that Spence was partial.

My paper, the "*Morning Post*," about three days back, mentions a case in point to the present upon tryal.* What can he mean? I have cudgelled my brains, and turned over Wraxall's "*Memoirs*" in vain, though the event was in 1780, the editor says, a year I remember but too well. Ask Mrs. Fox if she can guess what story he alludes to, and tell me what wonders Lord Byron is come home to do, for I see his arrival in the paper. His grandmother was my intimate friend, a Cornish lady, Sophia Trevanion, wife to the Admiral *pour ses péchés*, and we called her Mrs. Biron always, after the French manner. The friends you live among are more likely to know facts concerning Atterbury's tryal than I am, and where to find the letter, for such a letter there is, sure enough. Pope's letter to the Bishop at parting is pretty, and tender, and *touchant*; but I have not a good edition of Swift here, and the reading people of this town study only what is under ground, neglectful of the superficies. We have a geological school here, and professors; better than Weston-super-Mare, you'll say, where two books only were to be found in the place, a Bible and a *Paradise Lost*. I bought them both.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Penzance, 23d Sept. 1820.

My dear Sir James Fellowes should not have been followed up in this shameless manner, but that a letter from his brother Dorset, to whom I owe so much of kindness and obedience, charged me to write immediately to Adbury, and say he was well and happy (as it appears) at Paris. It made me so to understand how quiet all is there; and but that I believe the calm precedes *bourrasque*, my heart might be easy as to poor Louis Dix-huit, who I must love both as a king and individual. When he shall be removed, much misery will befall that devoted nation, which, having set fire to all Europe, will herself perish first in the flame. You know I cried *proximus ardet* long ago; but no one listened.

* The Queen's Trial.

Meanwhile, here am I at Penzance. "Ay," says the fool in Shakespear's "As You Like It," "here am I in the Forest of Ardenes, thou fool I." But 't is plain my fancy was not guided by his, who admonishes mortal man not to dwell either in a ditch, or on a terrace; you have always found me either in the one, or on the other.

Meanwhile, Charles Shephard has written to me from Santa Lucia, where he is Attorney-General, and where, from the public newspapers, he heard of my octogenary fête, and wished me joy with unabated good-humor.

Prosperity does make, or keep people good-humored, and if I can live to the 10th of July, 1821, I will be good-humored too; unless the radicals break up our funds entirely. For love of the Queen and the country, Cobbett did say in some of his papers three years ago, what a pleasure it would be to see 300,000 people starving; for then we should get rid of six individuals to him very obnoxious. A cheerful calculation! For my own part, however, I hope to come out next year with the swallows, if possible; they, and the sun, and your most humble servant, are all half-torpid, or retired at least during winter; and they tell me there is no winter at Penzance. A lady said here the other day, that she went to Taunton last year to see skating, — a diversion she had often heard of, and that she was gratified during her absence from home with a heavy fall of snow. I rather fancy there is some truth in all this, because of the shrubs in every little garden-plot: rhododendron now in beauty; myrtles covered with bloom, like Italy; and the arbutus high as an apple-tree, very handsome indeed, *sed non omnes arbusta juvant, humilesque myricæ*; and if I am doomed to six months exile, the finding myself in Botany Bay, will afford small consolation. Old friends in leather jackets, the books, do not desert me, and new friends are civil, send me figs and peaches, and invite me to their little parties, where we play sixpenny whist comfortably enough. Apropos to whist, you see the Duke of Grafton's papers explained nothing concerning who wrote Junius.

To Sir James Fellowes.

Penzance, Wednesday, 4 Jan. 1821.

MIL Años y mas, viva V. M., my dear Sir James Fellowes, whom I hasten to make again my debtor, as diligently as Tully* would hasten to make me so. I owe him but £ 10 now, however, and dividend day is coming. Apropos, my tenant, and your honor's not very near neighbor, — but neighbor compared to the distance I live at from all the world, — is in arrears £ 91, he did squeeze out £ 109 of the October money just before Christmas, and promised the rest; but those promises, like Tully's pie-crust, are made to be broken; a *pâté vol au vent*, I suppose.

I, and Miss Willoughby, who followed me uninvited, came hither professedly to avoid winter; and never in my sight did winter assume so terrific, so formidable a form: the sea rising to a tremendous height; fogs and snow thickening all around; and when any one is able to stand the storm, and call at the house, tales of shipwreck in every mouth. I will come to Penzance no more.

Meanwhile, poor Bath has, as you say, been suffering by the other destructive element; what a mercy that I was able to discharge Upham's long bill, before he was burned out of the premises I have often felt happy in. The fire-eaters would have been perhaps no better, they could not have been more active or friendly assistants than that charming Loder, the violin-player; who volunteered his services, and resigned the ruining those delicate fingers, by which alone he lives, to save the property of a man whose prejudices all militate against stage and orchestra. But virtue and genius should go together, and they commonly do.

The Bath newspaper tells of a clergyman at Newbury, who has prayed for the Queen ever since George 4th's accession, but who is now forbidden to do so by his Bishop.

Old Beadon, Bishop of Bath and Wells, is in *articulo mortis*, I understand, and probably Dr. Hall, if he is the bold man who stept forward with the prohibition, will succeed him. Llandaff was treated very roughly on less provocation by half.

* The Bath confectioner.

Fine times! are they not. The retrospect may be entertaining to the century; but this, young as it is, will smart, I think, before the year 1850.

Pourriture avant maturité, as the great Frederick of Prussia used to deprecate for his own government. I have never had courage to look in "Thraliana" since my arrival; so little does looking backward delight me.

At eighty-one years old 't is time to begin reconnoitring, when we know that retreat is impossible. Twenty years, *y mas*, have elapsed, since my two quartos were sent out, like Hamblet's father, with all their imperfections on their head. Well! no matter.

Do you remember the Name Book? it ended with Zenobia, and I must tell you a story of a Cornish gentlewoman hard by here, Zenobia Stevens, who held a lease under the Duke of Bolton by her own life only, — ninety-nine years, — and going at the term's end ten miles to give it up. She obtained kind permission to continue in the house as long as she lived, and was asked, of course, to drink a glass of wine. She did take one, but declined the second, saying, she had to ride home in the twilight upon a young colt, and was afraid to make herself giddy headed.

Don't I hear you cry, bravo Zenobia?

—'s pretty wife is screaming, I believe; she has outlived two accoucheurs. No wonder; I do think a country practitioner (meaning a medical man of all work) should have an iron constitution.* Our agreeable Dr. Forbes seems so endowed; a Scotchman, a competent scholar, full of country anecdote, and he told me the true tale of Zenobia, whose daughter died the other day, aged ninety-eight only. Those who said no snow was ever seen at Penzance, dealt in fiction and fable; here is a heavy snow this moment, and but that the sea is open enough, God knows, I should call it a polar winter. Dr. Parry's son will go again, it seems, for another £5,000; other inducement there can be none, and the most curious circumstance of the voyage is an account given by one of the officers, how his Irish setter, a tall, smooth

* In one of her marginal notes she quotes the saying of a distinguished lawyer, that a judge should have a face of brass, a constitution of iron, and a bottom of lead.

spaniel, attracted the attentions of a she wolf on Melville Island, who made love to the handsome dandy, and seduced him at length to end his days with her and her rough-haired family, refusing every invitation of return to the ship; a certain proof that dog, fox, jackall, &c., are only accidental varieties; while lupo is head of the house, penkennedil, as Welsh and Cornish people call it.

Adieu! I am going to eat a cod's-head, which you would be happy to give two guineas for when Lord Carnarvon dines with you. My servants have the rest for their dinner to-day and to-morrow. The whole fish cost half a crown. But there is a mermaid coming to England, I hear. That she ends in *piscem*, I partly believe, but *mulier formosa* I doubt. No room for more nonsense, scarce enough to say how many wishes for yours and your family's happiness are breathed in this distant region by, dear Sir, yours and their most obliged and grateful and faithful servant,

H. L. PROZZI.

To William Dorset Fellowes, Esq.

Penzance, 14 February, 1821.

WELL, my dear Sir, —

This day, whate'er the fates decree,
Shall still be kept with joy by me.

Sir James had a long letter from me some weeks ago, but I believe his toothache was so bad he never minded it. There has been a new attack made on my property, of which I gave him an account; but it will end in smoke before I can have time to tell you the tale, which relates to dividends left standing, unclaimed, an immense while, in the names of Thrale and Gifford. Some Mr. K —, I know not who, flies at me to ask what I did with them? God knows I did nothing with them, nor ever heard a breath concerning the matter, till his letter put me upon inquiry, and having written to Mrs. Merick Hoare, she consoles me by bearing testimony to my innocence of having ever touched this £ 600 which this gentleman believes himself heir to.

But this comes of too long life. My coadjutors and brethren

in the executorship were, it seems (but I knew it not), every one dead, when this stock was sold; and the name of poor H. L. Piozzi answers for all at the distance of fifteen years. If Mr. K—— ever crosses your way, do tell him I am an honest creature, incapable of wronging even a fly. My husband's illness, and my attendance on him who took up my whole heart and thought, did I suppose obliterate the transaction from my mind; which certainly does retain no trace of it.

Your duty as Secretary to the Lord Great Chamberlain of England* will now become less irksome, I hope, and friendship may have her share of your active beneficence; your dear sister is silent, but I am willing to believe pleasure helps detain her from her pen.

Conway is in high favor at Bath, the papers say; so indeed do private letters. That young man's value will be one day properly appreciated; and then you and I will be found to have been quite right all along.

Tell me about Miss Wilson meanwhile, and whether 't is somewhat in the Billington style, that she is excelling all the world so. My heart tells me 't is a long continued warble like *hers* which ever fascinates both skilful and unskilful critics; and which is more the gift of nature than of art.

But I hate reasoning down our own enjoyments; 't is like burning down rubies in a concave glass: the French never do it, and you will soon visit *them*, I dare say. *En attendant je vous souhaite, Monsieur* — it was a bishop's wish you know — *Paris en ce monde, Paradis en l'autre.*

To Miss Willoughby.

No. 10 Sion Row, Clifton,
16 March, 1821.

SOMETHING tells me — vanity I suppose — that dear Miss Willoughby will be glad to hear I am where I wish to be, on the sweet Gloucestershire Downs, numberless old acquaintance, and some new, kindly expressing pleasure at my return. Poor Mrs. Yorke, £10,000 richer than when we parted; ten years older,

* Lord Gwydir.

and all in ten months' time ; Mrs. Lambart's death, Sir Philip Jennings's sister, caused the alteration. Our friend Conway is not younger ; he won't play Master Slender now ; his enquiries after you were very kind indeed, and he rejoiced for my sake that Penzance was your chosen retreat. O, how he regrets his Lesserillo ! But Mr. Green has secured £ 500 per annum, with an agreeable woman, and must not, for shame, lament the profession, which will not soon cease to lament him. The benefits are thin I hear, but that for which we are interested gives good hope. Monday, 26th, will be the day, and Mirandola, with the Chevalier de Moranges, the night's entertainment. I have seen the future footman ; he will at worst be better than poor James, I suppose : who is gone to Bath now on a frolic : Bessy tearing her hair, and Mrs. Pennington exhausting all her eloquence in expressions of wrath and anger.

It is almost time to tell you what a providence watched over your old friend at Exeter, after my letter was written, at three o'clock, Sunday morning. The bed was very high, and getting into it, I set my foot on a light chair, which flew from the pressure, and revenged it on my leg in a terrible manner.

The wonder is, no bones were broken ; only a cruel bruise and slight tear, and we trotted on hither, after cathedral service, at which I hardly could kneel to thank God for my escape. So Sir John may look to my demise now at his leisure, and my legacy [leg I see].

"Not a mouse stirring," the French translators of Hamlet rendered, "*Je n'ai pas entendu un souris trotter.*" Our mouse could not trot without your assistance ; with it, he performed his journey beautifully ; though I did feel a horrid pang about my own imprudence, running into a dirty cottage on the road, full of the small-pox. Long live vaccination, however, and Dr. Jenner who first devised it.

Sunday, 18.

Here is a storm worthy of Mount's Bay ; your billows must roar finely this morning. Bessy would not trust me to church, I should have been blown down the hill, she says. So since Mr. Le Gris's blessing has helped bring me safe hither, I must not

press it further, but sit pretty and put my leg upon a chair, instead of my foot. Was not it a horrid accident? and in the dead of the night so! Dr. Forbes will be very sorry, for poor H. L. P., always a blue, now a black and blue, lady, bruised, say you, from top to toe? — “My Lord, from head to foot.”

The pet books, sent by waggon from Penzance (Pascoe’s cart carried them), are not arrived yet. The ship things all came safe.

To Sir James Fellowes.

24 March, 1821, Sunday Morning.

YOUR letter only came last night.

My dear Sir James Fellowes, though a tardy correspondent, is always a kind one. True it is, that your sister has seduced me to dine with her on Tuesday next; and rejoyce in our friend Conway’s success, which I hope to witness on Monday evening.

True it is, that I arrived at Clifton on the 12th March, escaping the stormy equinox, which must have shaken poor Penzance to the foundation. It is built upon the sand, so no wonder. True it is, that I hope to shew myself to you unimpaired, as to appearance; but my value will be lessened because I have broken my shin. Is not that the case now and then with a quick goer? Sleeping in Russel Street, however, would not do. I have asked Miss Williams to dine with Mrs. Pennington and me at the Elephant and Castle, where I will set up my repose, and keep my l. e. g — my elegy — in good repair. Mrs. Pennington is quite poetical, always eloquent on that, and every subject. Since my arrival at Sion Hill, — for there I occupy a lodging till my house in the Crescent is ready, — two parcels directed by tying friends, have given me a mournful sensation: they are letters written by me to them in distant days, I know not how happy. You will have to look them over after my death, and I dare say they are better than those I write now. My intention, however, is not to be in haste: though Salusbury seemed to apprehend his journey would be long and expensive if I died at Penzance. So here is poor aunt at the embouchure of his favorite River Severn, and here he may come after (the 10th of July) to

look after the demise and the legacy [leg I see]; but he must stay away till I have put my house in order.*

* "On the day following the date of this letter, which was the last I received from Mrs. Piozzi, I called at the Castle and Elephant at Bath, and found her and Mrs. Pennington. She was in high spirits, joking about the *l. e. g.* She dined with my father and sister, at No. 7 Russell Street, and was throughout the evening the admiration of the company, amongst whom were Mrs. Pennington, the lady so often mentioned in Anna Seward's correspondence as the beautiful and agreeable Sophia Weston; Admiral Sir Henry Bayntun, G. C. B., a distinguished naval officer at the battle of Trafalgar; Mr. Lutwyche (Mr. Lutwyche's house in Marlborough-buildings was celebrated for its hospitality, and as the resort of all the most agreeable society at Bath. Mrs. L. was the daughter of Sir Noah Thomas, a baronet and distinguished physician); and Mr. Conway, the actor, who was held in high estimation for his excellent private character. He fell overboard and was drowned on his passage from New York." — *Sir J. Fellowes.*

EXTRACTS

FROM

“THRALIANA” AND “BRITISH SYNONYMY.”

MISCELLANEOUS EXTRACTS FROM "THRALIANA."*

Miss Sreatfield. — I have since heard that Dr. Collier picked up a more useful friend, a Mrs. Streatfield, a widow, high in fortune and rather eminent both for the beauties of person and mind; her children, I find, he has been educating; and her eldest daughter is just now coming out into the world with a great character for elegance and literature. — 20 November, 1776.

19 May, 1778. — The person who wrote the title of this book at the top of the page, on the other side, — left hand, — in the black letter, was the identical Miss Sophia Streatfield, mentioned in "Thraliana," as pupil to poor dear Doctor Collier, after he and I had parted. By the chance meeting of some of the currents which keep this ocean of human life from stagnating, this lady and myself were driven together nine months ago at Brighthelmstone; we soon grew intimate from having often heard of each other, and I have now the honor and happiness of calling her my friend. Her face is eminently pretty; her carriage elegant; her heart affectionate, and her mind cultivated. There is above all this an attractive sweetness in her manner, which claims and promises to repay one's confidence, and which drew from me the secret of my keeping a "Thraliana," &c., &c., &c.

Jan. 1779. — Mr. Thrale is fallen in love really and seriously with Sophy Streatfield; but there is no wonder in that: she is very pretty, very gentle, soft, and insinuating; hangs about him, dances round him, cries when she parts from him, squeezes his hand slyly, and with her sweet eyes full of tears looks so fondly

* These extracts reached me after the preceding sheets were printed off.

in his face,* — and all for love of me, as she pretends ; that I can hardly, sometimes, help laughing in her face. A man must not be a *man* but an *it*, to resist such artillery. Marriott said very well,

“ Man flatt’ring man, not always can prevail,
But woman flatt’ring man, can never fail.”

Murphy did not use, I think, to have a good opinion of me, but he seems to have changed his mind this Christmas, and to believe better of me. I am glad on ’t to be sure : the suffrage of such a man is well worth having : he sees Thrale’s love of the fair S. S. I suppose ; approves my silent and patient endurance of what I could not prevent by more rough and sincere behavior.

20 January, 1780. — Sophy Streatfield is come to town, she is in the “Morning Post” too, I see (to be in the “Morning Post” is no good thing). She has won Wedderburne’s heart from his wife, I believe, and few married women will bear *that* patiently if I do ; they will some of them wound her reputation, so that I question whether it can recover. Lady Erskine made many odd enquiries about her to me yesterday, and winked and looked wise at her sister. The dear S. S. must be a little on her guard ; nothing is so spiteful as a woman robbed of a heart she thinks she has a claim upon. She will not lose *that* with temper, which she has taken perhaps no pains at all to preserve ; and I do not observe with any pleasure, I fear, that my husband prefers Miss Streatfield to me, though I must acknowledge her younger, handsomer, and a better scholar. Of her chastity, however, I never had a doubt ; she was bred by Dr. Collier in the strictest principles of piety and virtue ; she not only knows she will be always chaste, but she knows why she will be so. Mr. Thrale is now by dint of disease quite out of the question, so I am a disinterested spectator ; but her coquetry is very dangerous indeed, and I wish she were married that there might be an end on ’t. Mr. Thrale loves her, however, sick or well, better by a thousand degrees

* “ And Merlin looked and half believed her true,
So tender was her voice, so fair her face,
So sweetly gleamed her eyes behind her tears,
Like sunlight on the plain, behind a shower.”

Idylls of the King. — Vivien.

than he does me or any one else, and even now desires nothing on earth half so much as the sight of his Sophia.

“E’en from the tomb the voice of nature cries!
E’en in our ashes live their wonted fires!”

The Saturday before Mr. Thrale was taken ill — Saturday, 19th February — he was struck Monday, 21st February — we had a large party to tea, cards, and supper; Miss Streatfield was one, and as Mr. Thrale sate by her, he pressed her hand to his heart (as she told me herself), and said, “Sophy, we shall not enjoy this long, and to-night I will not be cheated of my only comfort.” Poor soul! how shockingly tender! on the first Fryday that he spoke after his stupor, she came to see him, and as she sate by the bedside pitying him, “O,” says he, “who would not suffer even all that I have endured to be pitied by you!” This I heard myself.

Here is Sophy Streatfield again, handsomer than ever, and flushed with new conquests; the Bishop of Chester feels her power, I am sure; she showed me a letter from him that was as tender and had all the tokens upon it as strong as ever I remember to have seen ’em; I repeated to her out of Pope’s Homer — “Very well, Sophy,” says I: —

“Range undisturbed among the hostile crew,
But touch not Hinchliffe,* Hinchliffe is my due.”

Miss Streatfield (says my master) could have quoted these lines in the Greek; his saying so piqued me, and piqued me because it was true. I wish I understood Greek! Mr. Thrale’s preference of her to me never vexed me so much as my consciousness — or fear at least — that he has reason for his preference. She has ten times my beauty, and five times my scholarship — wit and knowledge has she none.

May, 1781. — Sophy Streatfield is an incomprehensible girl; here has she been telling me such tender passages of what passed between her and Mr. Thrale, that she half frights me somehow, at the same time declaring her attachment to Vyse, yet her willingness to marry Lord Loughborough. Good God! what an uncommon girl! and handsome almost to perfection, I think:

* For Hector.

delicate in her manners, soft in her voice, and strict in her principles: I never saw such a character, she is wholly out of my reach; and I can only say that the man who runs mad for Sophy Streatfield has no reason to be ashamed of his passion; few people, however, seem disposed to take her for life, — everybody's admiration, as Mrs. Byron says, and nobody's choice.

Streatham, 1st January, 1782. — Sophy Streatfield has begun the new year nicely with a new conquest. Poor dear Doctor Burney! *he* is now the reigning favorite, and she spares neither pains nor caresses to turn that good man's head, much to the vexation of his family; particularly my Fanny, who is naturally provoked to see sport made of her father in his last stage of life by a young coquet, whose sole employment in this world seems to have been winning men's hearts on purpose to fling them away. How she contrives to keep bishops, and brewers, and doctors, and directors of the East India Company, all in chains so, and almost all at the same time, would amaze a wiser person than me; I can only say let us mark the end! Hester will perhaps see her out and pronounce, like Solon, on her wisdom and conduct.

Miss Nicholson. — After stating that she went to London, early in June, 1784, to procure a suitable companion for her daughters, after her marriage with Piozzi should have taken place, and mentioning several disappointments, Mrs. Piozzi goes on to say: —

“Providence, however, directed a Miss Nicholson to my door, and her peculiarly pleasing manners attracted me strongly. She referred me to Mr. Evans of Southwark for her character; and to every exterior accomplishment no objection could be made. Correct though sprightly, and steady though cheerful in her manner; the elegance of her form, the maturity of her age, and the soft expression of her countenance fixed my election, and I brought home to my daughters a woman of fashion fit for them to reside or converse or consult with. This sweet Miss Nicholson will make all still more smooth to me; she is a well-wisher to the cause, and will, when the girls are parted from me, keep them from hating or trampling on the memory of a mother who adores them; she professes to like me excessively, and if she

does, O how happy may this connection, so accidental and so extraordinary, make my poor suffering heart ! God bless her ! ”

Baretti. — Baretti had a comical aversion to Mrs. Macaulay, and his aversions are numerous and strong. If I had not once written his character in verse, I would now write it in prose, for few people know him better : he was — *Dieu me pardonne*, as the French say — my inmate for very near three years ; and though I really liked the man once for his talents, and at last was weary of him for the use he made of them, I never altered my sentiments concerning him ; for his character is easily seen, and his soul above disguise, haughty and insolent, and breathing defiance against all mankind ; while his powers of mind exceed most people’s, and his powers of purse are so slight that they leave him dependent on all. Baretti is forever in the state of a stream dammed up : if he could once get loose, he would bear down all before him.

Every soul that visited at our house while he was master of it, went away abhorring it ; and Mrs. Montagu, grieved to see my meekness so imposed upon, had thoughts of writing me on the subject an anonymous letter, advising me to break with him. Seward, who tried at last to reconcile us, confessed his wonder that we had lived together so long. Johnson used to oppose and battle him, but never with his own consent : the moment he was cool, he would always condemn himself for exerting his superiority over a man who was his friend, a foreigner, and poor : yet I have been told by Mrs. Montagu that he attributed his loss of our family to Johnson : ungrateful and ridiculous ! if it had not been for his mediation, I would not so long have borne trampling on, as I did for the last two years of our acquaintance.

Not a servant, not a child, did he leave me any authority over ; if I would attempt to correct or dismiss them, there was instant appeal to Mr. Baretti, who was sure always to be against me in every dispute. With Mr. Thrale I was ever cautious of contending, conscious that a misunderstanding there could never answer, as I have no friend or relation in the world to protect me from the rough treatment of a husband, should he chuse to exert his prerogatives ; but when I saw Baretti openly urging Mr. Thrale to cut down some little fruit-trees my mother had planted

and I had begged might stand, I confess I did take an aversion to the creature, and secretly resolved his stay should not be prolonged by my intreaties whenever his greatness chose to take huff and be gone. As to my eldest daughter, his behavior was most ungenerous; he was perpetually spurring her to independence, telling her she had more sense and would have a better fortune than her mother, whose admonitions she ought therefore to despise; that she ought to write and receive her own letters *now*, and not submit to an authority I could not keep up if she once had the spirit to challenge it; that, if I died in a lying-in which happened while he lived here, he hoped Mr. Thrale would marry Miss Whitbred, who would be a pretty companion for Hester, and not tyrannical and overbearing like me. Was I not fortunate to see myself once quit of a man like this? who thought his dignity was concerned to set me at defiance, and who was incessantly telling lies to my prejudice in the ears of my husband and children? When he walked out of the house on the 6th day of July, 1776, I wrote down what follows in my table book.

6th July, 1776. — This day is made remarkable by the departure of Mr. Baretti, who has, since October, 1773, been our almost constant inmate, companion, and I vainly hoped, our friend. On the 11th of November, 1773, Mr. Thrale let him have £ 50, and at our return from France £ 50 more, besides his clothes and pocket money: in return to all this, he instructed our eldest daughter — or thought he did — and puffed her about the town for a wit, a genius, a linguist, &c. At the beginning of the year 1776, we purposed visiting Italy under his conduct, but were prevented by an unforeseen and heavy calamity: that Baretti, however, might not be disappointed of money as well as of pleasure, Mr. Thrale presented him with 100 guineas, which at first calmed his wrath a little, but did not, perhaps, make amends for his vexation; this I am the more willing to believe, as Dr. Johnson not being angry too, seemed to grieve him no little, after all our preparations made.

Now Johnson's virtue was engaged; and he, I doubt not, made it a point of conscience not to increase the distresses of a family already oppressed with affliction. Baretti, however, from this time grew sullen and captious; he went on as usual notwith-

standing, making Streatham his home, carrying on business there, when he thought he had any to do, and teaching his pupil at by-times when he chose so to employ himself; for he always took his choice of hours, and would often spitefully fix on such as were particularly disagreeable to me, whom he has now not liked a long while, if ever he did. He, professed, however, a violent attachment to our eldest daughter; said if *she* had died instead of her poor brother, he should have destroyed himself, with many as wild expressions of fondness. Within these few days, when my back was turned, he would often be telling her that he would go away and stay a month, with other threats of the same nature; and she, not being of a caressing or obliging disposition, never, I suppose, soothed his anger or requested his stay.

Of all this, however, I can know nothing but from *her*, who is very reserved, and whose kindness I cannot so confide in as to be sure she would tell me all that passed between them; and her attachment is probably greater to him than me, whom he has always endeavored to lessen as much as possible, both in her eyes and — what was worse — her father's, by telling him how my parts had been over-praised by Johnson, and over-rated by the world; that my daughter's skill in languages, even at the age of fourteen, would vastly exceed mine, and such other idle stuff; which Mr. Thrale had very little care about, but which Hetty doubtless thought of great importance. Be this as it may, no angry words ever passed between him and me, except perhaps now and then a little spar or so when company was by, in the way of raillery merely.

Yesterday, when Sir Joshua and Fitzmaurice dined here, I addressed myself to him with great particularity of attention, begging his company for Saturday, as I expected ladies, and said he must come and flirt with them, &c. My daughter in the mean time kept on telling me that Mr. Baretti was grown very old and very cross, would not look at her exercises, but said he would leave this house soon, for it was no better than Pandæmonium. Accordingly, the next day he packed up his cloke-bag, which he had not done for three years, and sent it to town; and while we were wondering what he would say about it at break-

fast, he was walking to London himself, without taking leave of any one person, except it may be the girl, who owns they had much talk, in the course of which he expressed great aversion to me and even to her, who, he said, he once thought well of.

Now whether she had ever told the man things that I might have said of him in his absence, by way of provoking him to go, and so rid herself of his tuition; whether he was puffed up with the last 100 guineas and longed to be spending it *all' Italiano*; whether he thought Mr. Thrale would call him back, and he should be better established here than ever; or whether he really was idiot enough to be angry at my threatening to whip Susan and Sophy for going out of bounds, although *he* had given them leave, for Hetty said that was the first offence he took huff at, I never now shall know, for he never expressed himself as an offended man to me, except one day when he was not shaved at the proper hour forsooth, and then I would not quarrel with him, because nobody was by, and I knew him be so vile a liar that I durst not trust his tongue with a dispute. He is gone, however, loaded with little presents from me, and with a large share too of my good opinion, though I most sincerely rejoice in his departure, and hope we shall never meet more but by chance.

Since our quarrel I had occasion to talk of him with Tom Davies, who spoke with horror of his ferocious temper; "and yet," says I, "there is great sensibility about Baretti: I have seen tears often stand in his eyes." "Indeed," replies Davies, "I should like to have seen that sight vastly, when—even butchers weep."

The Burneys.—August, 1779.—Fanny Burney has been a long time from me; I was glad to see her again; yet she makes me miserable too in many respects, so restlessly and apparently anxious, lest I should give myself airs of patronage or load her with the shackles of dependence. I live with her always in a degree of pain that precludes friendship—dare not ask her to buy me a ribbon—dare not desire her to touch the bell, lest she should think herself injured—lest she should forsooth appear in the character of Miss Neville, and I in that of the widow Bromley. See Murphy's "Know Your Own Mind."

Fanny Burney has kept her room here in my house seven

days, with a fever or something that she called a fever; I gave her every medicine and every slop with my own hand; took away her dirty cups, spoons, &c.; moved her tables; in short, was doctor and nurse and maid, — for I did not like the servants should have additional trouble lest they should hate her for it. And now, — with the true gratitude of a wit, she tells me, that the world thinks the better of me for my civilities to her. It does? does it?

Miss Burney was much admired at Bath (1780); the puppy-men said, “She had such a drooping air and such a timid intelligence;” or, “a timid air,” I think it was, “and a drooping intelligence; never sure was such a collection of pedantry and affection as filled Bath when we were on that spot. How everything else and everybody set off my gallant bishop. *“Quantum Centa solent inter viburna Cupressi.”* Of all the people I ever heard read verse in my whole life, the best, the most perfect reader, is the Bishop of Peterboro’.

1st July, 1780. — Mrs. Byron, who really loves me, was disgusted at Miss Burney’s carriage to me, who have been such a friend and benefactress to her: not an article of dress, not a ticket for public places, not a thing in the world that she could not command from me: yet always insolent, always pining for home, always preferring the mode of life in St. Martin’s Street to all I could do for her. She is a saucy-spirited little puss, to be sure, but I love her dearly for all that; and I fancy she has a real regard for me, if she did not think it beneath the dignity of a wit, or of what she values more, — the dignity of Dr. Burney’s daughter, — to indulge it. Such dignity! the Lady Louisa of Leicester Square! In good time!

1781. — What a blockhead Dr. Burney is, to be always sending for his daughter home so! what a monkey! is not she better and happier with me than she can be anywhere else? Johnson is enraged at the silliness of their family conduct, and Mrs. Byron disgusted; I confess myself provoked excessively, but I love the girl so dearly, — and the Doctor, too, for that matter, only that he has such odd notions of superiority in his own house, and will have his children under his feet, forsooth, rather than let ’em live in peace, plenty, and comfort anywhere from home. If I did not

provide Fanny with every weareable — every wishable, indeed — it would not vex me to be served so ; but to see the impossibility of compensating for the pleasures of St. Martin's Street makes one at once merry and mortified.

Dr. Burney did not like his daughter should learn Latin even of Johnson, who offered to teach her for friendship, because then she would have been as wise as himself forsooth, and Latin was too masculine for Misses. A narrow-souled goose-cap the man must be at last, agreeable and amiable all the while too, beyond almost any other human creature. Well, mortal man is but a paltry animal ! the best of us have such drawbacks both upon virtue, wisdom, and knowledge.

September, 1781. — My five fair daughters too ! I have so good a pretence to wish for long life to see them settled. Like the old fellow in " Lucian," one is never at a loss for an excuse. They are five lovely creatures, to be sure, but they love not me. Is it my fault or theirs ?

August 28th, 1782. — He (Piozzi) thinks still more than he says, that I shall give him up ; and if Queeney made herself more amiable to me, and took the proper methods, — I suppose I should.

1st October, 1782. — After analyzing the state of her heart and feelings towards Piozzi, and balancing the *pros* and *cons*, she adds : These objections would increase in strength, too, if my present state was a happy one ; but it really is not. I live a quiet life, but not a pleasant one. My children govern without loving me. My friends caress and censure me. My money wastes in expenses I do not enjoy, and my time in trifles I do not approve ; every one is made insolent, and no one comfortable. My reputation unprotected, my heart unsatisfied, my health unsettled. I will, however, resolve on nothing.

April, 1783. — I will go to Bath : nor health, nor strength, nor my children's affections, have I. My daughter does not, I suppose, much delight in this scheme [viz. retrenchment of expenses and removal to Bath], but why should I lead a life of delighting her, who would not lose a shilling of interest or an ounce of pleasure to save my live from perishing ?

Piozzi was ill. A sore throat, Pepys said it was, with

four ulcers in it: the people about me said it had been lanced, and I mentioned it slightly before the girls. "Has he cut his own throat?" says Miss Thrale, in her quiet manner. This was less inexcusable because she hated him, and the other was her sister: though, had she exerted the good sense I thought her possessed of, she would not have treated him so: had she adored and fondled and respected him as he deserved from her hands, from the heroic conduct he shewed in January, when he gave into her hands, that dismal day, all my letters containing promises of marriage, protestations of love, &c., who knows but she might have kept us separated? But never did she once caress or thank me, never treat him with common civility, except on the very day which gave her hopes of our final parting. Worth while to be sure it was, to break one's heart for her! The other two are, however, neither wiser nor kinder; all swear by her, I believe, and follow her footsteps exactly. Mr. Thrale had not much heart, but his fair daughters have none at all.*

June, 1783. — Most sincerely do I regret the sacrifice I have made of health, happiness, and the society of a worthy and amiable companion, to the pride and prejudice of three insensible girls, who would see nature perish without concern were their gratification the cause.

The two youngest have, for ought I see, hearts as impenetrable as their sister. They will all starve a favorite animal, — all see with unconcern the afflictions of a friend; and when the anguish I suffered on their account last winter, in Argyll Street, nearly took away my life and reason, the younger ridiculed as a jest those agonies which the eldest despised as a philosopher. When all is said, they are exceeding valuable girls, — beautiful in person, cultivated in understanding, and well-principled in religion: high in their notions, lofty in their carriage, and of intents equal to their expectations; wishing to raise their own family by connections with some more noble and superior to any feeling of tenderness which might clog the wheels of ambition. What, however, is my state? who am condemned to live with girls of this disposition? to teach without authority; to be heard without

* This is the very accusation they all brought against her.

esteem ; to be considered by them as their superior in fortune, while I live by the money borrowed from them ; and in good sense, when they have seen me submit my judgment to theirs at the hazard of my life and wits. O, 't is a pleasant situation ! and whoever would wish, as the Greek lady phrased it, to teize himself and repent of his sins, let him borrow his children's money, be in love against their interest and prejudice, forbear to marry by their advice, and then shut himself up and live with them.*

Character of Johnson. — One evening as I was giving my tongue liberty to praise Mr. Johnson to his face, a favor he would not often allow me, he said, in high good-humor, "Come, you shall draw up my character your own way, and shew it me, that I may see what you will say of me when I am gone." At night I wrote as follows. — (Here followed the character which forms the conclusion of the *Anecdotes*.) At the end she writes : — "When I shewed him his Character next day, for he would see it, he said, 'It was a very fine piece of writing, and that I had improved upon *Young*,' who he saw was my model, he said, 'for my flattery was still stronger than his, and yet, somehow or other, less hyperbolic.'"

Baretti. — Will. Burke was tart upon Mr. Baretti for being too dogmatical in his talk about politics. "You have," says he, "no business to be investigating the characters of Lord Falkland or Mr. Hampden. You cannot judge of their merits, they are no countrymen of yours." "True," replied Baretti, "and you should learn by the same rule to speak very cautiously about Brutus and Mark Antony ; they are my countrymen, and I must have their characters tenderly treated by foreigners."

Baretti could not endure to be called, or scarcely thought, a foreigner, and indeed it did not often occur to his company that he was one ; for his accent was wonderfully proper, and his language always copious, always nervous, always full of various allusions, flowing, too, with a rapidity worthy of admiration, and far beyond the power of nineteen in twenty natives. He had also a knowledge of the solemn language and the gay, could be

* After Buckingham had been some time married to Fairfax's daughter, he said it was like marrying the devil's daughter, and keeping house with your father-in-law.

sublime with Johnson, or blackguard with the groom; could dispute, could rally, could quibble, in our language. Baretti has, besides, some skill in music, with a bass voice very agreeable, besides a falsetto which he can manage so as to mimic any singer he hears. I would also trust his knowledge of painting a long way. These accomplishments, with his extensive power over every modern language, make him a most pleasing companion while he is in good-humor; and his lofty consciousness of his own superiority, which made him tenacious of every position, and drew him into a thousand distresses, did not, I must own, ever disgust me, till he began to exercise it against myself, and resolve to reign in our house by fairly defying the mistress of it. Pride, however, though shocking enough, is never despicable, but vanity, which he possessed too, in an eminent degree, will sometimes make a man near sixty ridiculous.

France displayed all Mr. Baretti's useful powers, — he bustled for us, he catered for us, he took care of the child, he secured an apartment for the maid, he provided for our safety, our amusement, our repose; without him the pleasure of that journey would never have balanced the pain. And great was his disgust, to be sure, when he caught us, as he often did, ridiculing French manners, French sentiments, &c. I think he half cried to Mrs. Payne, the landlady at Dover, on our return, because we laughed at French cookery, and French accommodations. O how he would court the maids at the inns abroad, abuse the men perhaps! and that with a facility not to be exceeded, as they all confessed, by any of the natives. But so he could in Spain, I find, and so 't is plain he could here. I will give one instance of his skill in our low street language. Walking in a field near Chelsea, he met a fellow, who, suspecting him from dress and manner to be a foreigner, said sneeringly, "Come, Sir, will you show me the way to France?" "No, Sir," says Baretti, instantly, "but I will show you the way to Tyburn." Such, however, was his ignorance in a certain line, that he once asked Johnson for information who it was composed the Pater Noster, and I heard him tell Evans* the story of Dives and Lazarus

* Evans was a clergyman and (I believe) rector of Southwark.

as the subject of a poem he once had composed in the Milanese dialect, expecting great credit for his powers of invention. Evans owned to me that he thought the man drunk, whereas poor Baretto was, both in eating and drinking, a model of temperance. Had he guessed Evans's thoughts, the parson's gown would scarcely have saved him a knouting from the ferocious Italian.

When Johnson and Burke went to see Baretto in Newgate, they had small comfort to give him, and bid him not hope too strongly. "Why what can *he* fear," says Baretto, placing himself between 'em, "that holds two such hands as I do?"

An Italian came one day to Baretto, when he was in Newgate for murder, to desire a letter of recommendation for the teaching his scholars, when he (Baretto) should be hanged. "You rascal," replies Baretto, in a rage, "if I were not *in my own apartment*, I would kick you down stairs directly."

Piozzi. — Brighton, July, 1780. — I have picked up *Piozzi* here, the great Italian singer. He is amazingly like my father; he shall teach Hester.

13 August, 1780. — *Piozzi* is become a prodigious favorite with me, he is so intelligent a creature, so discerning, one can't help wishing for his good opinion; his singing surpasses everybody's for taste, tenderness, and true elegance; his hand on the forte piano too is so soft, so sweet, so delicate, every tone goes to the heart, I think, and fills the mind with emotions one would not be without, though inconvenient enough sometimes. He wants nothing from us; he comes for his health he says: I see nothing ail the man but pride. The newspapers yesterday told what all the musical folks gained, and set *Piozzi* down £ 1,200. o' year.

14 January, 1782, Harley Street. — I had a letter to-day desiring me to dine in Wimpole Street, to meet Mrs. Montagu, and a whole army of blues, to whom I trust my refusal will afford very pretty speculation, and they may settle my character and future conduct at their leisure. Pepys is a worthless fellow at last: he and his brother run about the town spying and enquiring what Mrs. Thrale is to do this winter, what friends she is to see, what men are in her confidence, how soon she will be married, &c.:

the brother doctor, the medico as we call him, lays wagers about me, I find. God forgive me, but they'll make me hate them both, and they are no better than two fools for their pains, for I was willing to have taken them to my heart.

Harley Street, 13 April, 1782. — When I took off my mourning, the watchers watched me very exactly, "but they whose hands were mightiest have found nothing:" so I shall leave the town, I hope, in a good disposition towards me, though I am sullen enough with the town for fancying me such an amorous idiot that I am dying to take up with every filthy fellow. God knows how distant such dispositions are from the heart and constitution of H. L. T. Lord Loughboro', Sir Richard Jebb, Mr. Piozzi, Mr. Selwyn, Dr. Johnson, every man that comes to the house, is put in the papers for me to marry. In good time I wrote to-day to beg the "Morning Herald" would say no more about me, good or bad.

Streatham, 17 April, 1782. — I am returned to Streatham, pretty well in health and very sound in heart, notwithstanding the watchers and the wager-layers, who think more of the charms of their sex by half than I who know them better. Love and friendship are distinct things, and I would go through fire to serve many a man whom nothing less than fire would force me to go to bed to. Somebody mentioned my going to be married t'other day, and Johnson was joking about it. I suppose, Sir, said I, they think they are doing me honor with these imaginary matches, when, perhaps the man does not exist who would do me honor by marrying me! This, indeed, was said in the wild and insolent spirit of Baretti, yet, 't is nearer the truth than one would think for. A woman of passable person, ancient family, respectable character, uncommon talents, and three thousand a year, has a right to think herself any man's equal, and has nothing to seek but return of affection from whatever partner she pitches on. To marry for love would therefore be rational in me, who want no advancement of birth or fortune, and till I am in love, I will not marry, nor perhaps then.

October, 1782. — There is no mercy for me in this island. I am more and more disposed to try the continent. One day the paper rings with my marriage to Johnson, one day to Crutch-

ley,* one day to Seward. I give no reason for such impertinence, but cannot deliver myself from it. Whitbred, the rich brewer, is in love with me too: O, I would rather, as Ann Page says, be set breast deep in the earth and be bowled to death with turnips.

Mr. Crutchley bid me make a curtsy to my daughters for keeping me out of gaol (*sic*), and the newspapers insolent as he! How shall I get through? How shall I get through? I have not deserved it of any of them, as God knows.

Philip Thicknesse put it about Bath that I was a poor girl, a mantua-maker, when Mr. Thrale married me. It is an odd thing, but Miss Thrales like, I see, to have it believed.

3 November, 1784. — Yesterday I received a letter from Mr. Baretti, full of the most flagrant and bitter insults concerning my late marriage with Mr. Piozzi, against whom, however, he can bring no heavier charge than that he disputed on the road with an innkeeper concerning the bill in his last journey to Italy; while he accuses me of murder and fornication in the grossest terms, such as I believe have scarcely ever been used even to his old companions in Newgate, whence he was released to scourge the families which cherished, and bite the hands that have since relieved him. Could I recollect any provocation I ever gave the man, I should be less amazed, but he heard, perhaps, that Johnson had written me a rough letter, and thought he would write me a brutal one: like the Jewish king, who, trying to imitate Solomon without his understanding, said, "My father whipped you with whips, but I will whip you with scorpions."

January, 1785. — I see the English newspapers are full of gross insolence to me: all burst out, as I guessed it would upon the death of Dr. Johnson. But Mr. Boswell (who I plainly see is the author) should let the *dead* escape from his malice at least. I feel more shocked at the insults offered to Mr. Thrale's memory than at those cast on Mr. Piozzi's person. My present husband, thank God! is well and happy, and able to defend himself: but dear Mr. Thrale, that had fostered these cursed wits so long! to be stung by their malice even in the grave, is too cruel: —

"Nor church, nor churchyards, from such fops are free." — POPE.

* She suspected Crutchley to be the natural son of Thrale.

1786. — It has always been my maxim never to influence the inclination of another: Mr. Thrale, in consequence, lived with me seventeen and a half years, during which time I tried but twice to persuade him to *do* anything, and but once, and that in vain, to let anything alone. Even my daughters, as soon as they could reason, were always allowed, and even encouraged, by me, to reason their own way, and not suffer their respect or affection for me to mislead their judgment. Let us keep the mind clear if we can from prejudices, or truth will never be found at all.* The worst part of this disinterested scheme is, that other people are not of my mind, and if I resolve not to use my lawful influence to make my children love me, the lookers-on will soon use their unlawful influence to make them hate me: if I scrupulously avoid persuading my husband to become a Lutheran or be of the English Church, the Romanists will be diligent to teach him all the narrowness and bitterness of their own unfeeling sect, and soon persuade him it is not delicacy but weakness makes me desist from the combat. Well! let me do right and leave the consequences in His hand who alone sees every action's motive and the true cause of every effect: let me endeavor to please God, and to have only my own faults and follies, not those of another, to answer for.

* "Clear your mind of *cant*." — JOHNSON.

EXTRACTS FROM "BRITISH SYNONYMY.

AFFECTION, PASSION, TENDERNESS, FONDNESS, LOVE.

THE first four of these words, then, so commonly, so constantly in use, are, although similar, certainly not synonymous; and the last, which always ought, and I hope often does comprehend them all, is not seldom substituted in place of its own component parts, for such are all those that precede it. Foreigners, however, will recollect, that the first of these words is usually adapted to that regard which is consequent on ties of blood; that the second naturally and necessarily presupposes and implies difference of sex; while the rest, without impropriety, may be attributed to friendship, or bestowed on babes. I have before me the definition of FONDNESS, given into my hands many years ago by a most eminent logician, though Dr. Johnson never did acquiesce in it.

"FONDNESS," says the definer, "is the hasty and injudicious determination of the will towards promoting the present gratification of some particular object."

"FONDNESS," said Dr. Johnson, "is rather the hasty and injudicious attribution of excellence, somewhat beyond the power of attainment, to the object of our affection."

Both these definitions may possibly be included in FONDNESS; my own idea of the whole may be found in the following example:—

Amintor and Aspasia are models of true LOVE: 't is now seven years since their mutual PASSION was sanctified by marriage; and so little is the lady's AFFECTION diminished, that she sat up

* *British Synonymy, or, An Attempt at Regulating the Choice of Words in Familiar Conversation.* By Hester Lynch Piozzi. In Two Volumes. London. 1794. This book has been long out of print, and contains much curious matter. Sir James Fellowes meditated a new edition of it.

nine nights successively last winter by her husband's bedside, when he had on him a malignant fever that frightened relations, friends, servants, all away. Nor can any one allege that her TENDERNESS is ill repaid, while we see him gaze upon her features with that FONDNESS which is capable of creating charms for itself to admire, and listen to her talk with a fervor of admiration scarce due to the most brilliant genius.

For the rest, 't is my opinion that men love for the most part with warmer PASSION than women do, — at least than English women, and with more transitory FONDNESS mingled with that passion; while 't is natural for females to feel a softer TENDERNESS; and when their AFFECTIONS are completely gained, they are found to be more durable.

AMIALE, LOVELY, CHARMING, FASCINATING.

These elegant attributives — so the learned James Harris terms adjectives denoting properties of mind or body — appear at first more likely to turn out synonymes, than upon a closer inspection we shall be able to observe: while daily experience evinces that there is an almost regular appropriation of the words; as thus, — an AMIALE character, a LOVELY complexion, a CHARMING singer, a FASCINATING converser; — the first of these appearing to *deserve* our love, the next to *claim* it, the third to *steal* it from us as by magic; the last of all to *draw*, and to *detain* it, by a half invisible, yet wholly resistless power. Nor does the epithet ever come so properly into play, as when tacked to an *unseen* method of attracting, — for positive beauty needs not fascination to assist her conquests; and positive wit seeks rather to dazzle and distress, than wind herself round the hearts of *her* admirers; while there is a mode of conversing that seduces attention, and enchains the faculties.

“When Foote told a story at dinner-time,” said Dr. Johnson, “I resolved to disregard what I expected would be frivolous; yet as the plot thickened, my desire of hearing the catastrophe quickened at every word, and grew keener as we seemed approaching towards its conclusion. The fellow *fascinated* me, Sir; I listened and laughed, and laid down my knife and fork, and thought of nothing but Foote's conversation.”

Some Italian lines set by Piccini, with expressive dexterity, represent this power beyond all I have read, — as descriptive of *female fascination* ;* and every man who has been in love with a woman, not confessedly beautiful, feels his heart beat responsive to the verses and the music, when sung with the good taste they deserve. Will the lines be much out of place here? I hope not.

In quel viso furbarello
V' è un incognita magia ;
Non si sa che diavol sia
Ma fa l' uomo delirar.

Quegli occhietti così vaghi
Ve lo giuro son due maghi,
E un sospiro languidetto,
Che fatica uscir dal petto
Vi fa subito cascar.

Vengon per ultimo i cari accenti,
Le lagrimuccie, li svenimenti,
Ch' opprimer devono
Perforza un cuor :

Innumerabile
Son l' incantesimi,
Son l' arti magichi
Del dio d'amor.

The following imitation misses its effect, because the measure is unfavorable, yet may serve to convey the idea : —

In that roguish face one sees
All her sex's witcheries ;
Playful sweetness, cold disdain,
Everything to turn one's brain.

Sparkling from expressive eyes,
Heaving in affected sighs,
Sure destruction still we find,
Still we lose our peace of mind.

* Her own description of Miss Streatfield's fascinations (*ante*, p. 477) is a better example.

Touched by her half-trembling hand,
 Can the coldest heart withstand ?
 While we dread the starting tear,
 And the tender accents hear.

Numberless are sure the ways
 That she *fascinates* our gaze ;
 Magic arts her power improve,
 Witcheries that wait on love.

ANTIPATHY, AVERSION, DISGUST.

The first of these disagreeable sensations we find chiefly excited I believe by inanimate things, or brutes. One man alleges his unconquerable ANTIPATHY to a cat ; another encourages his AVERSION to a Cheshire cheese ; and while English ladies think it delicate to faint at touch or even sight of a frog or toad, — Roman ladies, accustomed to noisome animals from the natural heat of their climate, fall into convulsions at a nosegay of flowers, or the scent of a little lavender water.* To such fastidious companions it would not be perhaps wholly unreasonable to feel a certain degree of DISGUST ; and Arnold of Leicestershire tells us from experience, that increasing ANTIPATHIES should be particularly dreaded, as an almost certain indication of incipient madness.†

AWEFUL, REVERENTIAL, SOLEMN.

The last of these epithets begins the climax — A Gothick cathedral (say we) is a SOLEMN place ; its gloomy greatness disposes one to REVERENTIAL behavior, inspiring sentiments more sublime, and meditations much more AWEFUL, than does a struc-

* So one hunting man complained that the violets spoilt the scent, and another that the singing birds prevented him from distinguishing the voices of his hounds.

† Shakespeare has put a plausible defence of antipathies into the mouth of Shylock, *Merchant of Venice*, Act IV. Scene 1 ; and Coleridge, in *Zapolya*, treats an instinctive dislike as a providential warning : —

“ O, surer than suspicion's hundred eyes
 Is that fine sense which to the pure in heart,
 By mere oppugnancy of their own goodness,
 Reveals th' approach of evil.”

ture on the Grecian model, though built for the same purposes of piety.*

The word *aweful* should however be used with caution, and a due sense of its importance ; I have heard even well-bred ladies now and then attribute that term too lightly in their common conversation — connecting it with substances beneath its dignity — such *mésalliances* offend the sense of high birth natural to a Saxon.†

AY and YES.

The first of these affirmatives, derived from the Latin *aiō*, is of the higher antiquity in our language, and still keeps some privileges of superiority, enforcing that which the other less decidedly asserts. It used to be represented in Shakespear's time by the single vowel *I* ; see the long scene between the Nurse and Juliet, when told of Tybalt's death ; but I recollect no later author who so corrupts it. We say in familiar talk, that Diana counsel'd her sister Flora against such a match ; did she not, Sir ? Yes, I believe she did. — *Counsel'd* her ! exclaims a stander-by — Ay, and controuled her too, or she had been his wife now.‡

BEAUTIFUL, HANDSOME, GRACEFUL, ELEGANT, PLEASING,
PRETTY, FINE,

Are, however desirable epithets, by no means strictly synonymous ; and though, upon a cursory view, the six last appear included in their principal, which takes the lead, conversation will soon inform us to the contrary, while, talking of a GRACEFUL dancer now upon the stage, we shall find in her person, if not put into motion, no claim at all upon our first attributive : — nor

* See the description of the temple in *The Mourning Bride*, Act II. Scene 3. Johnson, to tease Garrick, used to say that it was finer than any passage of equal length in Shakespeare. Mrs. Piozzi, in a marginal note, questions its originality, but says she has forgotten from whence it was borrowed.

† The word "mighty" was common in the last century — as, "mighty tire-some."

‡ When Queen Caroline first came to England, knowing not a word of English, a discussion arose what one word would be most useful or least dangerous for her to know. Lady Charlotte Lindsay suggested *no*, because it might be pronounced so as to mean *yes*. A very pretty song of Lover's is called *Yes and No*.

does that first necessarily comprehend the other excellences — for though the situation of Mount Edgcumbe be confessedly more BEAUTIFUL than Shenstone's Leasowes, taste would lead many men to prefer the latter, as more PLEASING: and at the time when true perfection of female beauty appeared among us in the form of Maria Gunning, I well remember hearing men say that other women might justly be preferred to her as PLEASING, and perhaps GRACEFUL too, in a far more eminent degree; and so true was the observation, that her inferiors made it their amusement to steal away lovers from her, who commanded admiration they had no chance to attain.

The word ELEGANT can scarcely be used with more propriety than on such occasions, when people *elect* as PLEASING what produces a train of ideas most congenial to our own particular fancy. Pearls are, on this principle, accounted by many people to be more ELEGANT than diamonds; which we all allow to be FINER, HANDSOMER, and infinitely more BEAUTIFUL. And one says popularly, that Pope's Rape of the Lock is an ELEGANT poem, and Milton's Paradise Lost a FINE one. Greville's Stanzas to Indifference are however exquisitely PRETTY, and some parts of Mr. Whalley's Ode to Mont Blanc, uncommonly BEAUTIFUL. Burke — whose own compositions include every species of excellence — says, that BEAUTIFUL objects are comparatively small, but to minute perfection I should give the adjective PRETTY. Insects of various colors, and delicate formation, butterflies above all, are justly termed PRETTY. Some shells, too, slight in their texture, and of tints as tender, claim this epithet, and can claim no more; for, while the apple and peach bloom have among vegetables the same pretension, — an orange-tree richly furnished, growing in the natural ground as I have seen them on the Borromæan Islands to a considerable height, and rose-trees in the Duke of Buccleugh's pleasure-grounds, or those of Hopeton-House, are decidedly BEAUTIFUL. One large and wide-spreading beech-tree, or full-bodied oak, single in a verdant meadow, I should select for a fine object* to repose the eye upon, in autum-

* Fine (from *fin*) must have implied delicacy; but its original sense has been reversed. A fine face is one with a bold and strongly marked outline; a fine child, a stout, healthy one; a fine woman, a well-formed one on a large scale.

nal seasons when the tint begins to shew more richness than mere maturity produces, and excites a train of reflections full of pensive dignity: while the old-fashioned avenue of lime-trees long-drawn and feathering down so as to hide all stem, makes a HANDSOME appearance in July, when filled with fragrance and redolent with bloom.

Were we speaking of architecture, I should direct foreigners to call the Pantheon at Rome a FINE building, Saint Peter's a BEAUTIFUL one, our own in London dedicated to St. Paul a very HANDSOME edifice, the Redentore at Venice, planned by Palladio, — and our own sweet Doric, done by Inigo Jones, — I reckon ELEGANT fabrics; while King's College, Cambridge, elaborately PRETTY, gives delight to every beholder. The word HANDSOME certainly annexes fewer ideas of pleasure than the rest, because we have appropriated it now and then somewhat meanly. We say a HANDSOME kitchen certainly in English, and a HANDSOME piece of roast beef;* nor do we give higher appellatives to a large woman painted by Rubens with more strength of color than dignity or grace. When we speak of a HANDSOME house and gardens, our hearers turn not, I believe, their imaginations to recollect Villa Albani or even Castle Howard, while a drive round London realizes the idea at less expense of trouble nearer home. But, after all, the words

BEAUTY, GRACE, EXPRESSION; CARRIAGE, ELEGANCE, AND SYMMETRY;

Are substantives on which so many volumes have been written, that one would think it impossible it should be still agreeable to read about them; yet is every writer tempted to extend on such

* "Handsome elocution" occurs in Addison. Archbishop Whately says that "Handsome implies not exactly an artificial beauty, but the beauty of some person or thing which is *trained* or *cultivated*." Thus he says we should not speak of a handsome wild animal, or a handsome prospect, although the Irish and Americans frequently do. The non-commissioned officer who gave evidence on the prosecution of Frost, said that when the order was given for returning the fire of the mob, the mayor (Sir Thomas Phillips) "handsomely" threw open the shutters of the room in which the soldiers were placed. In the performance of this handsome and gallant action he received a severe wound.

a subject, — every student attracted to continue a page where those names begin the leaf. And it is perhaps not wholly tedious or uninteresting to observe, that more, much more, is required to describe *BEAUTY*, than is comprehended in the common acceptance of the adjective *beautiful*: for, while *SYMMETRY* suffices to constitute a perfect form in many works of nature, and some of art, — as the mountain at the head of Loch Lomond in Scotland, and the Antonine column at Rome, — far more is demanded by connoisseurs who deal in animated excellence. A horse, for example, is scarcely allowed to possess true *BEAUTY*, till his owner can boast for him a brilliancy of coat, whatever the color may be, — a decided *ELEGANCE* as well as *SYMMETRICAL* proportion in his shape, — *GRACE* presiding in every motion, with eyes and ears expressive of a long-traced lineage, and even of apparent sensibility to his own praise and value. Haughty *CARRIAGE* is indispensable to brute perfection. The peacock is handsomer than the Chinese pheasant, because he is prouder; and the feline race take much from their own *BEAUTY*, by substituting the *EXPRESSION* of insidiousness instead of pride.

Indeed we are not correct when we require only *EXPRESSION* in a human face; for there are *EXPRESSIONS* which disgrace humanity. Among our own species we must meantime confess that we love a lofty consciousness of superiority, just stopping short of a vainglorious ostentation. *OS HOMINI SUBLIME DEDIT*, &c. The late Earl of Errol, dressed in his robes at the coronation of King George the Third, and Mrs. Siddons in the character of Murphy's Euphrasia, were the noblest specimens of the human race I ever saw: — while he, looking like Jove's own son Sarpedon, as described by Homer, — and she, looking like radiant Truth led by the withered hand of hoary Time — seemed alone fit to be sent out into some distant planet, for the purpose of shewing its inhabitants to what a race of exalted creatures God had been pleased to give this earth as a possession.

With regard to mere *GRACE*, I am not sure which produces most pleasing sensations in the beholder, — which, in a word, gives most delight, — well varied and nicely studied *ELEGANCE*, carried to perfection, though by an inferior form, as in the younger Vestris, — or that pure natural charm resulting from a *SYMMET-*

RIC figure put into easy motion by pleasure or surprise, as I have seen in the late Lady Coventry. To both attesting spectators have often manifested their just admiration, by repeated bursts of applause, — particularly to the countess, who, calling for her carriage one night at the theatre, — I saw her, — stretched out her arm with such peculiar, such inimitable manner, as forced a loud and sudden clap from all the pit and galleries ; which she, conscious of her charms, delighted to increase and prolong, by turning round with a familiar smile to reward the enraptured company.

For she was fair beyond their brightest bloom,
 This Envy owns, since now her bloom is fled ;
 Fair as the forms which, wove in Fancy's loom,
 Float in light vision o'er the poet's head.
 Whene'er with sweet serenity she smiled,
 Or caught the orient blush of quick surprise,
 How sweetly mutable ! how brightly wild
 The living lustre darted from her eyes !
 Each look, each motion waked a new-born grace,
 That o'er her form its transient glory cast ;
 Some lovelier wonder soon unsurped the place,
 Chased by a charm still lovelier than the last.

In her description alone might then all our synonymy be happily engaged ; and truly might we say that her unrivalled, her consummate BEAUTY was the effect of perfect SYMMETRY, spontaneously producing GRACE invincible, although her MIEN and CARRIAGE had less of dignity and sweetness in it ; and the EXPRESSION of her countenance, illuminated by the brightest tints, although lovelily mutable, as Mason says, in verses alone worthy the original, was always the EXPRESSION of pleasure felt or pleasure given. Her dress was seldom chosen with ELEGANCE, as I remember ; and I recollect no splendor except of general BEAUTY about her.*

* The best portraits of Maria Gunning, Countess of Coventry, confirm Mrs. Piozzi's theory of the enthusiastic admiration lavished on her. It must have been principally elicited by grace and expression. Her sister, Elizabeth, afterwards Duchess of Hamilton and (by a second marriage) of Argyll, was equally beautiful, and her beauty has been inherited by her descendants in three generations. The sisters set off each other, and their appearance together added to the

BROOD, CLUTCH, PROGENY OF FEATHERED ANIMALS.

It is distressing enough to foreigners when they find us arbitrarily calling the young domestic fowl which follow a turkey a fine BROOD, when we talked but two minutes before of a CLUTCH of chickens, and perhaps cry out in the next breath, Here 's a *flock* of young geese on this water! The first of these words, however, must be their decided choice; as in saying *that* they cannot be wrong: the last word does not strictly allude to the goslings, but means the number altogether; and the second word is only used from the trick a hen has to herself almost, of calling her little ones so *closely* round her in times of danger, that you may CLUTCH or make a handful of them, as we say. Mr. Addison, who was more an elegant author than good naturalist, teaches them in his Spectators to say a BROOD of ducks, when he expresses his admiration of the providence by which all the works of heaven are governed; and he is the best language-master: though that very paper betrays the little skill with which he looked on such matters in a thousand instances.*

BROOK, RIVULET, STREAM, RIVER,

Are much in the same manner synonymous, so far as relates to poetical use, &c.; but Mr. Locke shews us how to separate them

charms of both. A corresponding effect may have been seen in our time, when three celebrated sisters were grouped together, or when the two Northumbrian beauties were the rage, or when more than one lovely mother, who shall be nameless, came forth attended by a fresher and lovelier self, *matre pulchrâ filia pulchrior*.

At a crowded London party, I was asked by a very distinguished Frenchman to point out the beauties in vogue. Those nearest to us happened to be no longer in the first flush of youth; they had not that *beauté du diable* which Frenchmen deem indispensable, and he exclaimed: "You English are as odd in this as in other matters: you cling to your established beauties as you stand by your old institutions." Among those he gazed upon was one who, after being for sylph-like loveliness the *beau idéal* of the poet's and artist's dream, had arrived at the perfection of ripened and developed beauty.

* The language of the sporting world is capricious and arbitrary; and to use *brace* or *couple* irregularly is as fatal to a young man's reputation as a false quantity was once. The cant phrase now is, I *got* (not I killed or shot) so many brace, &c.

in conversation, and how they really separate by nature, when he tells us that “SPRINGS make little RIVULETS, and these united form BROOKS; which coming forward in STREAMS, compose great RIVERS that run into the sea.” Doctor Johnson, whose ideas of anything not positively large were ever mingled with contempt, asked of one of our sharp currents in North Wales, “Has this BROOK e’er a name?” and received for an answer, “Why, dear Sir, this is the RIVER Ustrad!” “Let us,” said he, turning to his friend, “jump over it directly, and shew them how an *Englishman* should treat a *Welsh* RIVER.”

CLEVER, DEXTROUS, SKILFUL;

To which might be added another pretty word well taken into our language without alteration of spelling, and called *adroit*. This adjective should not have been omitted on the list, as it will be very suitable to foreigners, and less approaching to vulgarity than CLEVER, which, if applied to things high or serious, frights one. We say, The minister managed ADROITLY in procuring men eminently SKILFUL in the art of engineering, and equally DEXTROUS in the manual use of such machines, — for let a fellow be as CLEVER as he can, without practice no person will arrive at being neat-handed and DEXTROUS about anything, least of all in matters where complicated machinery is in question; I have therefore little opinion of those contrivances and modern inventions to prevent fire or thieves; particularly a piece of workmanship once shewn me of a ladder and fire-engine combined, which alternately prevented the operation of each other. Few things, indeed, are more offensive than those futile, and half-impracticable devices to snuff a candle after some new method; by which tricks CLEVER fellows, however, are SKILFUL enough to get money from neighbors more rich than wise, who, like the lady in Young’s Satires,

“To eat their breakfasts will project a scheme,
Nor take their tea without a stratagem;”

to the contriving of which we will leave them.*

* “Cleverness (from the verb *to cleave*) is correctly applied to a certain quickness and readiness in the operations of the mind, and especially in the art of ac-

TO CRY, TO EXCLAIM,

Are pretty near synonymous in some senses certainly; but if a foreigner speaking of the London CRIES called them the EXCLAMATIONS of the city, all would laugh. 'T is very strange meantime, and to me very unaccountable, that the streets' cries should resemble each other in all great towns, — but sure I am that *Spaz-camin*, with a canting drawl at the end, sounds at Milan like our *Sweep sweep* exactly; and the *Garçon Limonadier* at Paris makes a pert noise like our orange-girls in the Pit of Covent Garden, that sounds precisely similar. I was walking one day with my own maid in an Italian capital, and turned short on hearing sounds like those of a London tinker — the man who followed us cried *Cafferol*, *Cafferol d'accommodar* — to the tune of his own brass kettle just as ours do; and I believe that in a little time, many cities will be more famous for the musick and frequency of their cries than London; because shops there, increasing daily, nay hourly, take all necessity of hawkers quite away, — excepting perhaps just about the suburbs and new-built houses, where likewise shops are everlastingly breaking forth, and afford people better appearance of choice than can be easily carried about by those who CRY them.

TO CRY, TO WEEP,

Are really and I think completely synonymous, only that the last verb being always appropriated to serious purposes, we never scarcely use it in colloquial and familiar discourse, unless ironically, — for 't is as we say a tragedy word, — and Do not CRY so, is the phrase to children or friends we are desirous of comforting. Tears have a very powerful effect on young people, and indeed on all those who are new in the world: — but veterans have seen them too often to be much affected; and since the years 1779 and 80, when I lived a great deal with a lady* who could call them

quiring knowledge. But the loose way in which ideas are expressed in ordinary conversation has led to a considerable abuse of this word, which is not seldom applied to every kind of talent." — *English Synonyms*, by the Archbishop of Dublin.

* The charming S. S.

up for *her own* pleasure, and often *did* call them up at *my request*, the seeing one WEEP has been no proof to me that anything sad or sorrowful had befallen; and perhaps some of the sincerest tears are shed when reading Richardson's *Clarissa*, or seeing Siddons in the character of Mrs. Beverley. With regard to real anguish of the heart, an old sufferer WEEPS but little.

“Slow-paced and sourer as the storms increase,
He makes his bed beneath th' inclement drift,
And scorning the complainings of distress,
Hardens his heart against assailing want —”

like Thomson's Bear, so beautifully described by a poet equally skilled in the knowledge of life and of nature. Such reflections however will lead my readers naturally enough on to the next synonymes, which are

DEFORMED, UGLY, HIDEOUS, FRIGHTFUL.

Dyer derives the second of these unlucky adjectives from *ough* or *ouph*, or goblin, not without reason, as it was long written *ougly* in our language. FRIGHTFUL bears much the same bad sense, I think. — Goblins are still called *frightening* in the provinces of Lancaster and Westmorland; and the third word upon the list, from *hideux*, French, is but little softer, if at all so. DEFORMED has a more positive signification than the rest; for we know not how easily delicate people may be FRIGHTED nor how small a portion of UGLINESS will suffice to call forth from affectation the cry of HIDEOUS! while hyperbolic talkers have a way of giving these rough epithets to many hapless persons, who are in earnest neither more nor less than *plain*; by which I mean to express a form wholly divested of grace, a countenance of coarse color and vacant look, with a mien possessing no comeliness; which quality would alone protect them from deserving even that title, because they would be then *ornamented*. Those however who most loudly profess being always scared when they are not allured, will in another humor be easily enough led to confess that many an UGLY man or woman are very agreeable, and display sometimes powers of pleasing unbested even on the beautiful; which could scarcely happen

sure, were their unfortunate figures and faces *ouph* like, or terrifying : — it were well then if the English, who hate hyperbole in general, would forbear to use it so constantly just where 't is most offensive, in magnifying their neighbors' defects.

Lord Bacon says the deformed people are good to employ in business, because they have a constant spur to great actions, that by some noble deed they rescue their persons from contempt ; and experience does in some sort prove his assertion ; many men famous in history having been of this class, — the great warriors, above all, as it should seem in very contradiction to nature — where Agesilaus, King William the Third, and Ladislaus surnamed *Cubitalis*, that pigmy King of Poland, reigned and fought more victorious battles, as Alexander Gaguinus relates, than all his longer-legged predecessors had done.* *CORPORE PARVUS ERAM*, exclaims he — *CUBITO VIX ALTIOR, SED TAMEN IN PARVO CORPORE MAGNUS ERAM*. Nor is even Sanctity's self free from some obligations to deformity, — while Ignatius Loyola losing a limb at the siege of Pampelona, and conceiving himself no longer fit for wars or attendance on the court, betook himself to a mode of living more profitable to his soul in the next world, and to his celebrity in this, than that would have been which, had his beauty remained, he might have been led to adopt.

That *DEFORMED* persons are usually revengeful all will grant ; † and the Empress Sophia had cause to repent her insulting letter to old Narses, when she advising him to return and spin with her maids, — he replied, "that he would spin such a thread as her Majesty and all her allies would never be unable to untwist." — Nor did he in the least fail of fulfilling the menace ; which reminds one of Henry the Fifth's answer, when the Dauphin of France, despising his youth and spirit of frolicking, sent over

* "It is probable that among the 120,000 soldiers who were marshalled round Neerwinden under all the standards of Western Europe, the two feeblest in body were the hunch-backed dwarf (Luxemburg) who urged forward the fiery onset of France, and the asthmatic skeleton (William) who covered the slow retreat of England." (*Macaulay's Hist.*, Vol. IV. p. 410.) All readers of Shakespeare will remember the Countess of Auvergne's speech to Talbot :

"It cannot be this weak and writled shrimp
Should strike such terror to his enemies."

† Shakespeare puts their justification into the mouth of Richard the Third.

tennis balls as a fit present for a prince addicted more to play than war. — Our young hero's reply being much in the spirit of that sent by Narses to the Empress, one might have thought it borrowed, had not eight centuries elapsed between the two events. These matters may for aught I know be all mentioned in a pretty book I once read when newly published, and have never seen since ; it came out three or four and thirty years ago, and gained to its author the appellation of DEFORMITY *Hay*. He likewise translated some epigrams of Martial, but for his Essay on Deformity I have enquired in vain ; and if I am guilty of plagiarism it is *à mon insçu*, as the French express it. Meantime UGLINESS in common conversation relates merely to the face, whilst DEFORMITY implies a faulty shape or figure. FRIGHTFUL and HIDEOUS may be well appropriated to delirious dreams ; to the sight of mangled bodies, or human heads streaming with blood, such as France has lately exhibited for the savage amusement of a worse than brutal populace ; but the words *plain* or *homely* are sufficient to express that total deficiency of beauty too often termed UGLINESS in our friends and neighbors. That such is not the proper expression is proved by that power of pleasing, universally allowed to the late Lord Chesterfield, who had nothing in his person which at first sight could raise expectation of any delight in his society ; and perhaps to overcome prejudice in private life, and make an accomplished companion out of an ill-cut figure and homely countenance, may be more difficult than by warlike prowess and acts of heroic valor to gain and keep celebrity in the field of battle.

Where there is a talent to please however, pleasure will reside ; and one of the best and most applauded minuets I ever saw, was danced at Bath many years ago by a lady of quality, pale, thin, crooked, and of low stature ; — my not wishing to name her is notwithstanding a kind of proof that her elegance would not (in her absence) compensate for her DEFORMITY : so surely do readers in general take up and willingly cherish a disadvantageous idea rather than a kind one. Pope, who was DEFORMED enough to have felt the truth of this position, and ingenious enough to have found it out had he *not* felt it, disoblged his patron Mr. Allen so much by these lines,

" See low-born Allen, with an *awkward* shame,
Do good by stealth, and blush to find it fame;"

that he was forced to learn by experience how one of the best and humblest of mankind suffered more pain by having his awkwardness and mean birth perpetuated, than he enjoyed pleasure in having his virtue celebrated by a poet, whose works certainly would not fail of consigning it to immortality.

TO DEFY, TO CHALLENGE.

These words are synonymous when applied to a single combat between particular people; but the first verb is vastly more comprehensive than the second. Antony CHALLENGED Augustus to commit the fate of universal empire to his single arm, conscious that in such a contest (as his opponent easily discovered) the advantages lay all against Octavius, who for that reason laughed at his proposal, and with due dignity DEFIED such empty menaces.* A man whose situation is wholly desperate, may indeed CHALLENGE the seven champions if he chooses, without fear of losing the victory, because no loss can set him any lower; but who is he that would be mad enough to enter the lists?

Our two words were not ill-exemplified in a very different line of life, when a flashy fellow, known about London by the name of Captain Jasper some twenty years ago, burst suddenly into the Bedford Coffee-house, and snatching up a hat belonging to some one in the room, cried out, — "Whoever owns this hat is a rascal, and I CHALLENGE him to come out and fight." A grave gentleman sitting near the fire replied, in a firm but smooth tone of voice, "Whoever does own the hat is a blockhead, and I hope we may defy you, Sir, to find any such fool here. Captain Jasper walked to the street-door, and discharged a brace of bullets into his own head immediately.†

* Napoleon, when challenged by Sir Sidney Smith in Egypt, replied that he would think of it when his proposed antagonist was a Marlborough.

† A stock story at the *Grecian* was, that a bully, who insisted on a particular seat, came and found it occupied by a templar; "Who is that in my seat?" "I don't know, sir," said the waiter. "Where is the hat I left on it?" "He put it into the fire." "Did he! d—n—n! — but a fellow who would do *that* would not mind flinging *me* after it;" and so saying he disappeared.

TO DROP, TO FALL, TO TUMBLE, TO SINK SUDDENLY.

These neuter verbs are not synonymous; because, although whatever DROPS must in some measure FALL, yet everything that FALLS does not necessarily DROP. A man climbed a tree in my orchard yesterday, for example, where he was gathering apples; having missed his footing, I saw him, after many attempts to save himself by catching at boughs, &c., FALL at length to the ground — the apples DROPPED out of his hand on the first moment of his slipping. To SINK SUDDENLY, half implies that he FELL in the water, unless we speak of such an earthquake as once destroyed the beautiful town of Port Royal in Jamaica, when the ground cleaving into many fissures, people SUNK IN on the sudden; some breast-high, others entirely out of sight. To TUMBLE is an act of odd precipitancy, and often means voluntary FALLS endured, or eluded by fearlessness and adroit agility: 't is then a verb active, a trick played to get money, and shew the powers of humanity at an escape, as in feats of harlequinery; or the strange thing done many years ago by Grimaldi, a famous grotesque dancer, eminent for powers of this kind, at the Meuse Gate in London; where having made a mock quarrel, and stripped himself as if intending to fight, previously collecting a small circle to see the battle, he suddenly sprang over his antagonist's and spectators' heads, and TUMBLING round in the air, lighted on his legs and ran away, leaving the people to gape. When the well-known Buffo di Spagna, or Spanish buffoon, who delighted to frequent such exhibitions, was asked what person he thought to be the first TUMBLER in the world, he archly replied: "Marry, Sirs, I am of opinion that 't was *Lucifer*; for he TUMBLED first, and TUMBLED furthest too, and yet hurt himself so little with the FALL, that he is too nimble for many of us to escape him yet."

DULL, STUPID, HEAVY.

Of the first upon this flat and insipid list Mr. Pope has greatly enlarged the signification, and taught us to call everything DULL that was not immediately and positively witty. This is too much,

surely ; and indeed one finds it received so only in the Dunciad or Essay upon Criticism. Information may be **HEAVY** sometimes without being **STUPID** or **DULL**, I think ; its own weight of matter may render it so ; and he who conveys useful knowledge should neither be mocked nor slighted because he happens to be unskilled in the art of levigating his learning to hit the strength or rather feebleness of moderns to endure it. There is, however, a kind of talk that is merely **HEAVY**, and in no sense important. Such conversation has been lately called a *bore*,* from the idea it gave some old sportsman originally I believe of a horse that hangs upon his rider's hand with a weight of **STUPID** impulse, as if he would *bore* the very ground through with his nose ; tiring the man upon his back most cruelly. The cant phrase used at those public schools, where they call a boy who is not quick-witted, and cannot be made a scholar, a *blunt*,† is so good, that I sigh for its removal into social life, where blunts are exceedingly frequent, and we have no word for them. Dullard is out of use ; we find it now only in Shakespeare.

MARRIAGE, WEDDING, NUPTIALS.

Although these are all common conversation words, they can scarcely be used synonymously. There is a treaty of **MARRIAGE** going forward in such a family, say we, and I expect an invitation to the **WEDDING** dinner, as 't is reported the parents are disposed to celebrate these **NUPTIALS** with great festivity, and very few friends of the family will be left out.

Meantime our great triumph over foreigners, who visit us from warmer climates, is in the superior felicity of our married couples ; nor do I praise those superficial writers who so lament the infidelities committed among *us* — in papers which carried to the Continent tend to make them believe there is no more conjugal attachment in Britain, than at Genoa or Venice. — Truth is, we

* The word *bore* is even more abused than clever, and frequently creates the very feeling it affects to describe. Young ladies and gentlemen who are suffering from mere vacancy of mind, make a merit of their emptiness by exclaiming, in a tone of conscious superiority, that they are *bored*. The mechanical operation of *boreing* may have suggested the word.

† The *ne plus ultra* of insults at a German University is *Dummkopf*.

we find in all great capitals an ill example set by a dozen women of distinction who give the *ton* as 't is called ; and with regard to such, London confesses her share : — yet is the mass of middling people left untainted ; and even among our nobility, those of the first fortune and dignity in England live with an Arcadian constancy and true affection, such as can very rarely happen in nations where a contrary conduct is neither punished by the Legislature, nor censured by Society ; for there is no need to resolve virtue and vice into effect of *climate*, unless we are supposed to improve or degenerate like animals which *whiten* as they approach the Pole, — human nature will go wrong if religion forbears to restrain, and government neglects to punish.

MELODY, HARMONY, MUSICK.

These terms are used as synonymes only by people who revert not to their derivation ; when the last is soon discovered to contain the other two, while the first means merely the air, — or, as Italians better express it, *la cantilena*, — because our very word MELODY implies *honey-sweet singing*, *mellifluous* succession of simple sounds, so as to produce agreeable and sometimes almost enchanting effect. Meanwhile both co-operation and combination are understood to meet in the term HARMONY, which, like every other science, is the result of knowledge operating upon genius, and adds in the audience a degree of astonishment to approbation, enriching all our sensations of delight, and clustering them into a maturity of perfection.

MELODY is to HARMONY what innocence is to virtue ; the last could not exist without the former, on which they are founded ; but we esteem him who enlarges simplicity into excellence, and prize the opening chorus of *Acis and Galatea* beyond the *Voi Amanti* of *Giardini*, although this last-named composition is elegant, and the other vulgar.

Where the original thought, however, like *Corregio's Magdalen* in the *Dresden Gallery* set round with jewels, is lost in the blaze of accompaniment, our loss is the less if *that* thought should be somewhat coarse or indelicate ; but MUSICK of this kind pleases an Italian ear far less than do *Sacchini's* sweetly soothing

MELODIES, never overlaid by that fulness of HARMONY with which German composers sometimes perplex instead of informing their hearers. *His* choruses in *Erifile*, though nothing deficient either in richness or radiance, are ever transparent; while the charming subject (not an instant lost to view) reminds one of some fine shell colored by Nature's hand, but seen to most advantage through the clear waves that wash the coast of *Coromandel* when mild monsoons are blowing. With regard to MUSICK, Plato said long ago, that if any considerable alteration took place in the MUSICK of a country, he should, from that single circumstance, predict innovation in the laws, a change of customs, and subversion of the government. Rousseau, in imitation of this sentiment, which he had probably read *translated* as well as myself, actually foretold it of the French, without acknowledging whence his idea sprung; and truly did he foretell it. "The French," says he, "have no MUSICK now, — nor can have, because their language is not capable of musical expression; but if ever they *do* get into a better style — (which they certainly soon did, changing Lulli and Rameau for Gluck and for Piccini) — *tant pis pour eux.*"

Rousseau had indeed the fate of Cassandra, little less mad than himself; and Burney justly observed, that it was strange a nation so frequently accused of volatility and caprice, should have invariably manifested a steady perseverance and constancy to one particular taste in this art, which the strongest ridicule and contempt of other countries could never vanquish or turn out of its course. He has however lived to see them change their mode of receiving pleasure from this very science; has seen them accomplish the predictions of Rousseau, and confirm the opinions of Plato; seen them murder their own monarch, set fire to their own cities, and blaze themselves away, — a wonder to fools, a beacon to wise men. This example has at least served to show the use of those three words which occasioned so long a speculation. MELODY is chiefly used speaking of vocal MUSICK, and HARMONY means many parts combining to form composition. Shall I digress in saying that this latter seems the genuine taste of the English, who love plenty and opulence in all things? Our MELODIES are commonly vulgar, but we like to see them richly

drest; and the late silly humor of listening to tunes made upon three notes only, is a mere whim of the moment, as it was to dote upon old ballads about twenty or thirty years ago; it will die away in a twelvemonth, — for simplicity cannot please without elegance; nor does it really please a British ear, even when exquisitely sweet and delicate.

We buy Blair's works, but would rather study Warburton's; we talk of tender Venetian airs, but our hearts acknowledge Handel. Meantime 't is unjust to say that German MUSICK is not expressive; when the Italians say so, they mean it is not *amorous*; but other affections inhabit other souls; and surely the last-named immortal composer has no rival in the power of expressing and exciting sublime devotion and rapturous sentiment. See his grand chorus, *Unto us a Son is born*, &c. Pleyel's Quartettos too, which have all somewhat of a drum and fife in them, express what Germans ever have been excelled in, — regularity, order, discipline, arms, in a word, war. When such MUSICK is playing, it reminds one of Rowe's verses which say so very truly, that

“ The sound of arms shall wake our martial ardor,
And cure the amorous sickness of a soul
Begun by sloth and nursed with too much ease.
The idle god of love supinely dreams
Amidst inglorious shades and purling streams;
In rosy fetters and fantastic chains
He binds deluded maids and simple swains;
With soft enjoyment woos them to forget
The hardy toils and labors of the great:
But if the warlike trumpet's loud alarms
To virtuous acts excite, and manly arms,
The coward boy avows his abject fear,
Sublime on silken wings he cuts the air,
Scared at the noble noise and thunder of the war.”

What then do those critics look for, who lament that German MUSICK is not *expressive*? They look for plaintive sounds meant to raise tender emotions in the breast; and this is the peculiar province of MELODY, — which, like Anacreon's lyre, vibrates to amorous touches only, and resounds with nothing but love. Of this sovereign power,

“ To take the 'prisoned soul, and lap it in Elysium,”

Italy has long remained in full possession : the Syrens' coast is still the residence of melting softness and of sweet seduction. The MUSICK of a nation naturally represents that nation's favorite energies, pervading every thought and every action ; while even the devotion of that warm soil is tenderness, not sublimity ; — and either the natives impress their gentle souls with the contemplation of a Saviour newly laid, in innocence and infant sweetness, upon the spotless bosom of more than female beauty, or else rack their soft hearts with the afflicting passions ; and with eyes fixed upon a bleeding crucifix, weep their Redeemer's human sufferings, as though he were never to re-assume divinity. Meantime the piety of Lutherans soars a sublimer flight ; and when they set before the eyes of their glowing imagination Messiah ever blessed, they kindle into rapture, and break out with pious transport,

“ Hallelujah ! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth,” &c.

They think of Him that sitteth high above the heavens, begotten before all worlds !

“ Effulgence of the Father ! Son beloved ! ”

With such impressions, such energies, such inspiration, Milton wrote poetry, and Handel composed MUSICK.

MISTAKE, ERROR, MISCONCEPTION.

Whoever thinks these words strictly synonymous will find himself in an ERROR ; while he who says he wandered out of his way between London and Bath, from mere MISCONCEPTION, makes a comical MISTAKE, — for he only committed an ERROR in neglecting to punish those who turned him out of the right road *for a joke*. These are the niceties of language that books never teach, and conversation alone can establish. Let foreigners however settle it in their minds, that the word first used in this catalogue of false apprehension, is used when one man or one thing is taken for another ; the second applies much wider, and we say it of all who deviate from the right path, whether that deviation is or is not caused by a mere MISTAKE ; the latter seems less an act of the will than either of the other two ; 't is

more a perversion of the head than anything else, and its resistance against conviction carries with it somewhat laughable. A nobleman, for instance, employing his architect to show him the elevation of a house he intended to build, the artist produced a drawing made with Indian ink. This is no bad form of a house, says my lord, but I don't like the color, — my house shall be *white*. By all means, replied the builder, this is a white house. No, this is black and white, methinks — evidently so, indeed, — and striped about somehow in a way that does not please me.* O dear! no such thing, my lord, — the house will be white enough. That I don't know, Sir; if you contradict my senses *now*, you may do the same *then*; but my house shall not be patched about with black as this paper is, — it shall be all clean Portland stone. Doubtless, my lord; what you see here is perfectly *white*, I assure you. You are an impudent fellow (answers the proprietor), and endeavor to impose upon me, because I am not conversant in these matters, by persuading me that I do not know black from white; but I do know an honest man from a rogue, — so get about your business directly, no such shall be my architect.

This was MISCONCEPTION. When the faux Martin Guerre came to France from India, and took possession of the house, lands, wife, &c. of a man whom he strongly resembled, and who, by four or five years' absence from his family, was so forgotten by them that neither brother nor sister found out the imposture — their caresses and obedience, their rents and profits, were all intended to the person of another man, and were only paid to him by a fatal but innocent MISTAKE. But when the jury condemned a man wholly unconcerned in the business to suffer for a crime one of themselves had committed, nor ever found out that good evidence was wanting to prove his guilt, till the real perpetrator of the murder owned it himself in private to the judge — they acted with too little caution and delicacy, and have been always justly censured for the ERROR. The facts are all acknowledged ones.

* This recalls the reply of a distinguished lawyer (now a peer) to the late Mr. Justice Gaselee, who remarked that Canning was not so tall as the bronze statue of him near Westminster Hall: "No, nor so green either."

NARRATION, ACCOUNT, RECITAL.

In order to give a good ACCOUNT of the fact (say we), 't is necessary to hear a clear RECITAL of the circumstances, but if we mean to make a pleasing NARRATION, those circumstances should not be dwelt on too minutely, but rather one selected from the rest, to set in a full light. Whoever means to please in conversation, seeing no person more attended to than he who tells an agreeable story, concludes too hastily that his own fame will be firmly established by a like means ; and so gives his time up to the collection and RECITAL of anecdotes. Here, however, is our adventurer likely enough to fail ; for either his fact is too notorious, and he sees his audience turn even involuntarily away from a tale told them yesterday perhaps by a more pleasing narrator ; or it is too obscure, and incapable of interesting his hearers. Were we to investigate the reason why narratives please better in a mixed company, than sentiment ; we might discover that he who draws from his own mind to entertain his circle will soon be tempted to dogmatize, and assume the air, with the powers, of a teacher ; while the man, who is ever ready to tell one somewhat unknown before, adds an idea to the listener's stock, without forcing on us that of our own inferiority. He is in possession of a fact more than we are, that's all ; and he communicates that fact for our amusement.

NATION, COUNTRY, KINGDOM,

Are all of them collective terms well understood, and at first sight only synonymous. A moment's reflection shews us many COUNTRIES which are not kingdoms, and some KINGDOMS which include not the whole NATION to which they apparently belong. The first of these words is used in some universities for the distinction of the scholars, and professors of colleges. The faculty of Paris consists of four, and when the procureur of that which is called the French NATION speaks in public, his style is *Honoranda Gallorum Natio*. I hope they have changed their phrase now, when all KINGDOMS, COUNTRIES, NATIONS, and LANGUAGES unite in abhorrence of their late disgraceful conduct towards the

good house of Bourbon, so named from Archibald Borbonius in the year 1127, whose impress was a globe, and round it this anagram of the earl's name, *Orbi bonus*. The times how changed in this fatal year to Frenchmen, 1793!

Strokes of national character, national humor, however, still exist: with regard to the latter, we see *their* bons mots still untranslatable beyond those of other kingdoms; and our authors plunder French comedies in vain; the humor loses and evaporates: witness Farquhar's endeavor to force into his *Inconstant*, the gay reply made by Le prince de Guemenè, when Louis Quatorze's queen, a grave Spaniard, seriously proposed putting the famous Ninon de l'Enclos among *les filles repenties*. — "Madam," answered the courtier, "*elle n'est ni fille, ni repentie*."* This was NATIONAL pleasantry, and will not translate for that reason. No more will that proof of John Bull's NATIONAL character, told of a fellow, who, when King Charles the First of England lay before Rochelle, was employed by that Prince as a diver, to carry papers, &c., which having done most dexterously, the good-natured sovereign bid him name his own reward. — "Something to drink your majesty's health, that's all," quoth the man. "Blockhead!" exclaimed the Duke of Buckingham, who stood in presence and was provoked at his stupidity for asking nothing better, "why didst not *drink* when thou wert under water?" — "Why, so I did, master!" replied the man; "but the water was salt, you know, so it made me the more a-dry."

NOW, AT PRESENT, THIS INSTANT.

While metaphysicians expand their subtleties into imperceptibility upon this fatal monosyllable, one would hope that conversation might go on without dispute concerning what flies away like the witches in Macbeth, who, while we contend about the nature of their existence, *make themselves air, into which they vanish*. So, alas! does NOW; the present moment passing away even before the word is written that explains it. We may tell foreigners, however, that 't is usual in our language, when calling in

* When an English lady appeared in a *tableau vivant* as a Magdalen, it was observed that she looked like a Magdalen who had *not* repented.

a hurry, to cry NOW, NOW, as the quickest expression, I suppose, for urging another to immediate haste. "AT PRESENT we cannot come to you" — is a common phrase — He was here THIS INSTANT, means, 'tis not an instant scarcely since he was here : but it does certainly mean time *past* ; for one says to a person who, looking round, misses the individual sought for, — " Why, she is here, NOW, cannot you see her ? "

" I thought we were to begin upon the subject NOW," says a man impatient of decision. " We *will* begin THIS INSTANT," replies his cooler friend (meaning a *future* time, though near) ; " AT PRESENT it would not be so proper." These things are difficult to foreigners ; nor can I guess why both time past, and time to come, should be hourly and commonly exprest by THIS INSTANT, which at first view appears improper enough.

TO NULLIFY, TO ANNULL, TO DISANNULL, TO MAKE NULL AND VOID.

These verbs stand in conversation chiefly in the place of the verb to annihilate, or rather between that and the softer phrase of, to render ineffectual. Horatio's arguments, say we, were rendered NULL and VOID, at least in my opinion, by what our friend Cleomenes urged against them : but no man better knows than he how to NULLIFY the discourse of his competitor without annihilating the speaker either in his own eyes, or those of the auditors ; as a good legislator will see the way to ANNULL a statute no longer useful or necessary, without taking away by direct annihilation all trace or remembrance of its former utility. The third verb is a favorite among the vulgar here in England, who misapply it comically enough. I asked the late Lord Halifax's gardener for a walk and summer-house I used to see at Horton : " There was such a walk once," replies the man, " but my Lord DISANNULLED it."

In 1815, Mrs. Piozzi sent a copy of " British Synonymy " to Sir James Fellowes with the following note and verses, which will appropriately conclude this compilation :

5 Nov., 1815.

Accept, dear Sir, this second-hand copy of your poor little friend's favorite work, now completely out of print. That it should bear the name of Samuel Johnson on the title page, is so curious, that I would not erase it.

Ten years at fewest must have elapsed since the author of the "Rambler" had breathed his last, when this book saw the light : and he to whom I have now the honor of presenting it, was struggling between the perils of fire and water in the midst of the Atlantic Ocean. Awful Retrospect ! Yet a lightly volant pen traces the following lines, only to say that

In this Synonymy you 'll find
Portraits from poor Floretta's mind ;
With many a tale and many a jest,
By which her fancy was imprest.
Oh ! had that fancy been acquainted
With characters too late displayed,
Far happier pictures had been painted,
Far stronger light and softer shade.
Beneath the life-preserving hand,
How had we seen the soldier stand !
Or kneel, instructed to adore
Him who bestow'd the healing power.
But merit, dazzling men to blindness,
Was still reserved for Piozzi's *Finis*.

INDEX.

- Abdy, Lady and Miss, 359.
 Abington, Mrs., 59.
 Aldborough, Lady, anecdote of, 20, 234.
 Alfieri and the Duchess of Albany, 226.
 Alexander I. of Russia, anecdote of, 312.
 Alphabet, infant, Mrs. Thrale's, 31.
 "Alphabet, the Political, or the Young Member's A, B, C," quoted, 32.
 Amelia, Princess, daughter of George II., 227.
 Andrews, Miles Peter, 229.
 — his death, 313.
 "Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson," 39, *note*, 333.
 Anne, Queen, couplet on, 226.
 Angelsea, isle of, 409.
 Antichrist, 365.
 Ashe, Miss, 227.
 Asheri, Mrs. Piozzi's story of, 258.
 Aston, Molly, Johnson's admiration for, 17.
 — Johnson's epigram on her, 28.
 "Atlas" man-of-war, the, 242.
 Atmospheric stones, 311.
 Autobiographical Memoirs of Mrs. Piozzi, 161 *et seq.*
 Bäch y Graig, Dr. Johnson's description of, 49, 173.
 "Bæviad and Mæviad," origin of the, 90.
 Bagot, Mrs., 298.
 Baillie, Joanna, 436.
 Balbus, story of, 355.
 Banks, Sir Joseph, 410, 412.
 Barclay, Mr., the Quaker, purchases Mr. Thrale's brewery, 64, 108, 202.
 Baretti, Signor Giuseppe, his verses, quoted, 18.
 — accompanies Dr. Johnson and the Thrales on a tour to France, 53.
 — history of, 54.
 — his trial for murder, 55.
 — his introduction to the Thrales, 56.
 — Dr. Warton's opinion of him, 56.
 — account of him by Dr. Campbell, 57.
 — his dislike of Boswell, 58.
 Baretti, passages in Dr. Johnson's letters relating to, 114.
 — his papers in the "European Magazine," 115.
 — his death, 115.
 — his rupture with Dr. Johnson, 116.
 — his character, sketched by Mrs. Thrale, 116, 481, 488, 489.
 — the comedy of the "Sentimental Mother," 117.
 — lines on his portrait, 256.
 Barnard, Dr., Provost of Eton, Johnson's remarks on, quoted, 39, *note*.
 Barrow, his description of Wit, quoted, 155.
 Bassi's verses, 266.
 — translation of, 266.
 Bath, riots in, 458.
 Bayntun, Admiral Sir H., 474, *note*.
 Beadon, Dr., 468.
 Bearcroft, Mr., anecdotes of, 137.
 Beauclerc, Lady Diana, 103.
 Beauclerc, Topham, 238, 276.
 Bells, names of, 373.
 Beloe, his "Sexagenarian," 399.
 Bentley, Dr. Richard, his verses on Learning, 223.
 Bertola's verses, 276.
 — his fables, 277.
 Betty, the actor, 317.
 Blue-Stocking Clubs, origin of the, 14.
 Bodryddan, visited by Johnson, 50.
 Bodville, Mrs. Thrale's birthplace, 51.
 Boethius, Dr. Johnson and Mrs. Thrale's translations from, 31, 222.
 Bolingbroke, Lord, anecdote of Johnson and, 102.
 Bolingbroke, Lady, 276.
 Bolton, Duke of, Lord Harry Powlett, anecdote of, 252.
 Bonaparte, intelligence of his meditated escape from Elba, 231.
 — military tactics, 243.
 — his expedition to Egypt, 296.
 — pasquinade on, 316.
 — the Apocalyptic beast, 319.
 Boothby, Miss Hill, Johnson's admiration for, 16.

- Boswell, James, his character as a biographer, 2.
 — his "Letters to Temple," and "Boswelliana," 2.
 — his account of Johnson's introduction into Mr. Thrale's family quoted, 6.
 — his jealousy of Mrs. Thrale, 6.
 — his first visit to Streatham Park, 25.
 — arranges an interview between Johnson and Lord Marchmont, 26.
 — his conversations at Streatham, 27.
 — his version of Johnson's epigram on Mary Aston, 28.
 — his proposed poetical epistle to Johnson, 30.
 — his dislike of Baretta, 58.
 — Walpole's remarks on his "Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson," 90.
 — reasons for his depreciating Mrs. Piozzi, 90.
 — Peter Pindar's satire on, quoted, 99.
 Boulogne, Mrs. Piozzi's account of, 122.
 Bouverie, Mrs., 233.
 Bowdler, Rev. Dr., 61.
 Bowles, Mr., shooting his nephew, 421.
 Bowles, Rev. W., and his fountain, 50, *note*.
 Boyce, Johnson's description of, 221.
 — his verses to Cave, 221.
 Bramah and his air-balloon, 327.
 Brighton, Dr. Johnson at, 65.
 Bristow, Caroline (afterwards Mrs. Lytton), 52.
 British Museum, 422.
 Broadhead, Mrs., 384.
 Browne, Isaac Hawkins, 103.
 Brynbella, 141, 142, 197.
 Buffon, verses on, 280.
 Burdett, Lady, 441.
 Burdett, Sir F., 417, 452.
 Burke, Right Hon. Edmund, his opinion of Dr. Johnson as a public speaker, 42.
 — remarks on him, 238.
 — lines on his portrait, 256.
 Burney, Miss. See D'Arbly, Madame.
 Burney, Dr., 432.
 — quoted, 10, *note*.
 — his visit with his daughter to Streatham Park, 34.
 — his description of Mr. and Mrs. Piozzi in 1808, 142.
 — and Dr. Johnson, 214.
 — his verses to Mrs. Thrale, 214.
 — lines on his portrait, 256.
 Burney, Dr. junior, his death, 408.
 Byng, Admiral, 234.
 Byron, Mrs. (wife of the Admiral), 61, 106, 466.
 Byron, Mrs., 218.
 Byron, Lord, 308, 422, 466.
 Byron, Lord, his estimate of life at thirty-five quoted, 20.
 — his estimate of Italian singers, 71.
 — his description of Curran and Madame de Staël, 155.
 — his "Cain," 454.
 Cader Idris, 306.
 Campbell, Dr. Thomas, his "Diary" quoted, 56, *note*.
 — Mrs. Thrale's account of him, 57.
 — his account of the mode of life at Streatham, 57.
 Capetian Dynasty, story of the, 317.
 Capua, poverty of, 378.
 Caraboo, Princess of Jarasu, 390, 391.
 Careless, of the "Blue Posts," and Mrs. Thrale, 41.
 Carlton House, 298.
 Carlyle, the bookseller, 453, 454.
 Caroline of Anspach, Queen, and Sir Woolston Dixie, anecdote of, 233.
 Caroline, Queen, at Bath, 400, 401, 403.
 — her death, 411.
 — her trial, 466.
 Caroline of Naples, story of, 84.
 Carter, Mrs., her "Letters," 389.
 Catamaran, 218.
 Cathcart, Lady, in "Castle Rackrent," 78.
 Catherine, Empress of Russia, verses on, 226.
 Catholic question, 417, 429.
 Cator, Mr., 196, 197, 201.
 — Dr. Johnson's remark on, 104.
 Cave, Boyce's verses to, 221.
 Cervantes, 329.
 Chalmers' "Modern Astronomy," 356.
 Chamberlayne, Mr., his verses, "The Pleiades," 225.
 Chambers, Sir Robert, 211.
 — lines on his portrait, 255.
 Chantilly, Mrs. Piozzi's account of, 122.
 Chappelow, Mr., 384, 385.
 Charles Edward, the young Pretender, at Florence, 226.
 Charlotte, the Princess, her marriage, 349.
 — her death, 401.
 Charlotte, Queen, 112.
 Chester, walls of, 49.
 Chesterfield, Philip Dormer, Earl of, 120.
 Christmas, old customs at, 311.
 Churchill, the poet, quoted, 237.
 Cicisbeism in Italy, 126.
 Clinton, Lord John, 61.
 Club, the Literary, formation of the, 13.
 Club, Hell-fire, incident at the, 238, *note*.
 Clubs, the Blue-Stocking, origin of the, 14.
 Clwyd, the river, 49.
 Cobbett, William, 327, 372, 467.
 Coligny, Henrietta de, verses on, 225.

- Collier, Dr., 171.
 — educates Miss Hester Lynch Salusbury, 171.
 — Mrs. Piozzi's account of, 209.
 Comber, Mr., his verses, 444.
 Combermere Abbey, Johnson's visit to, 52.
 Condé, Prince of, anecdote of the, 123, 124.
 Congreve, W., his "Way of the World" quoted, 29.
 Conway, Mr. Shipley, 50, *note*.
 Conway, W. A., and Mrs. Piozzi, 143, 436, 441, 446, 452, 456, 471, 472.
 — notice of him, 143.
 — his letter to Mrs. Piozzi's executors, 150.
 Conway, 446, 447, 471, 472.
 "Corinne" quoted, 78, *note*.
 Corsini, Prince, 81.
 Corsini, Cardinal, 81.
 Cotton, Mrs., her cascade, 50.
 Cotton, George (afterwards Dean of Chester), 418.
 Cotton, Sir Lynch, Johnson's visit and rudeness to, 52.
 Cotton, Sir Robert Salusbury, 166.
 Cowper, Countess, 226.
 Cowper, William, quoted, 361.
 Coxe's "Life of the Duke of Marlborough," 420.
 Crewe, Mrs., 233, 236, 428.
 Croker, Right Hon. John Wilson, Lord Macaulay's remarks on his editions of Boswell's "Johnson" quoted, 21.
 — his translation of Johnson's epigram on Mary Croker, 28.
 — his account of the correspondence between Dr. Johnson and Mrs. Piozzi on her marriage, 73.
 Cumberland, Duke and Duchess of, 80.
 Curran, J. P., Byron's description of him, 155.
 Custom House, fire at the, 308.
 Cuzzona, the actress, story of, 133.
 Dancing, 454.
 D'Arblay, Madame, 17, 107.
 — her account of her first visit to Streatham Park, 34.
 — her "Evelina," 35.
 — her introduction to Dr. Johnson, 36.
 — her notes of conversations at Streatham, 39.
 — quoted, 12.
 — her "Diary" quoted, 51, *note*, 61, 64, 69, 70, 87.
 — her letter to Mrs. Piozzi on her marriage, 72.
 — her remarks on Johnson's "Letters," 111.
 — her character of Mrs. Piozzi, 152.
 D'Arblay, Madame, her description of the Streatham portraits, 251.
 — her "Camilla," 298.
 — her "Wanderer," 308.
 — Mrs. Piozzi's account of her, 484.
 Davenant, Mrs., 61, 220.
 Davis, Eliza, story of, 387.
 Davison's verses on Dido, 276.
 Death, Dr. Johnson's letter upon, 111.
 Delamira of the "Tatler," 234.
 Delap, Dr., 65, 103.
 Della Crusca verses, 270.
 Demosthenes, Johnson's remark on, 29.
 Dent, "Dog," and his bill on dogs, 303.
 Desmoulins, Mrs., 11.
 Dido, verses on, 276.
 — epigrams, 275.
 Divorces, conversation at Streatham on, 27.
 Dixie, Sir Woolston, and Queen Caroline, 233.
 Dobson, Dr., 189.
 Doddridge's epigram on his own motto quoted, 237.
 Dodding, Bub (Lord Melcombe), his "Diary," 371.
 Doukin, General, 349, 354.
 Dress, female, 408.
 — Dr. Johnson's observations on female dress and demeanor, 44, 45.
 Dunning, Lord Ashburton, his personal vanity, 105.
 — his ugliness, 239.
 Duppa, R., Esq., edits Johnson's "Journey into Wales," 49, 369.
 "Duty and Pleasure," 250.
 Edward, Prince, brother of George III., 232.
 Eglintoun, Lady, 294.
 Elton, Mr., 453.
 English, John, his epitaph, 304.
 Enigma, an, 446.
 Epaminondas, 243.
 Esher in Surrey, 295.
 Etruscan pottery, 352.
 Exmouth, liberation of slaves, 399.
 Exmouth, Lord, Christian slaves liberated by, in Rome, 314.
 Faber's prophecy for 1866, 404.
 "Fable for April, 1815, a," 319.
 Fables of Bertola, 277.
 Falmouth, Lord, 241.
 "Fancy, Imagination," 181.
 Farinelli, the singer, 416.
 Farmer, Dr., 439.
 Ferrier, Miss, the novelist, 426.
 Fidele, Casa, Mrs. Piozzi's account of the, 193.
 Fielding, Henry, his disregard of the value of money, 141.
 — Sally, sister of the novelist, 178.

- Fife, Lord, 197.
 Fire-eaters, the, 428.
 Fisher, Clara, 409.
 Fitzpatrick, 174.
 Fitzwilliam, Lord, 454.
 Flahaut, Count, 416.
 Flint, Bet, Johnson's story of, 38.
 Flood, Right Hon. H., his opinion of
 Dr. Johnson's qualifications as a pub-
 lic speaker, 42.
 "Florence Miscellany," account of the,
 90, 268, 270.
 — preface to the, 281.
 Florence, Mrs. Piozzi's description of,
 129.
 "Florizel and Perdita," Garrick's, 25.
 Foote, Samuel, 212.
 "Fountains, The," Johnson's tale of,
 31.
 Fox, Lady Caroline, 211.
 Fox, Charles James, his verses, "The
 Planets," 224.
 — his character, 235.
 — his talents, 238.
 France, Johnson's tour in, 53.
 — verses on, in 1792, 323.
 "Frankenstein," 404, 441.
 Franklin, Benjamin, Wedderburne's re-
 mark on, 239.
 — Mrs. Piozzi's account of, 239.
 — Mr. Dale's lines on, 240.
 French, Mrs. Piozzi's sketch of the,
 124.
 Gainsborough, the painter, anecdote of,
 231.
 Gaming, 337.
 Garrick, David, Dr. Johnson's opinion
 of his talents for light gay
 poetry, 25, 168, 433.
 — his flattery of Dr. Johnson, 29.
 — his profession depreciated by Dr.
 Johnson, 97.
 — anecdote of, 222.
 — his lines on Pelham, 244.
 — lines on his portrait, 255.
 Garrick, David, his lines written at
 Streatham, 324.
 Garrick, George, 103.
 Garrick, Mrs., 106.
 Gas lights introduced into London, 313,
 394.
 Genoa, siege of, 311.
 George III., caricature on, 225.
 — anecdote of, 232.
 — insults offered to him, 294.
 Gibbes, Dr., 403, 437, 444.
 Gibbon, Edmund, remarks on his style,
 312.
 Gifford, W., origin of his "Bæviad and
 Mæviad," 90.
 — his scurrilous lines on Mrs. Piozzi,
 121.
 Gifford, W., his attack on Mrs. Piozzi's
 "British Synonymy," 132.
 Gisborne's "Natural Theology," 408.
 Glasse, Rev. G. H., notice of, 368,
 note.
 — his motto, 410.
 Glover, Miss, the actress, 415.
 Gluttony, Mrs. Piozzi's remarks on,
 219.
 Godwin, Miss, 441.
 Goldsmith, Oliver, 131.
 — his prodigality, 134.
 — his story of the boxer, 350.
 — his portrait at Streatham, 254.
 Gray, Dr., 417.
 — his "Connections between Sacred
 Writ and Classic Literature,"
 367.
 — death of his mother, 402.
 Greenlanders, 442.
 Gunnings, the Miss, 218.
 Gwaynyog, Dr. Johnson at, 51.
 Hagley, Johnson's visit to, 52.
 Hales, Dr., and his prophecy, 410, 412.
 Halifax, Lord, 168, 172.
 Halsey, Edmund, uncle of the elder
 Thrale, Mrs. Thrale's note respecting
 his rise, 5.
 Hamilton, Archdeacon, 234.
 Hamilton, Lady Archibald, 234.
 Hamilton, Single-speech, supposed au-
 thor of "Letters of Junius," 235.
 Hampton Court Palace, 354.
 Harrington, Dr., 342, 344, 350.
 — his death, 347.
 Harris, James, Esq., author of
 "Hermes," 32, 178.
 Hart, Polly, 448.
 Hawkins, Miss, 77.
 Hawkins, Sir John, 42.
 — his account of the correspondence
 between Dr. Johnson and Mrs.
 Piozzi on her marriage, 73.
 Head, Mr., 217.
 Hell-fire Club, incident at the, 238,
 note.
 "Herald, The Morning," verses on Mrs.
 Thrale in the, quoted, 33.
 Hogarth, William, his portrait of Mrs.
 Thrale, in the "Lady's Last
 Stake," 24, 177, 337.
 — his impromptu addressed to Mr.
 Tighe, 336.
 Holland, Sir Henry, Bart., 156, 342,
 343.
 Holywell, Johnson at, 50.
 Hone, Mr., 404.
 Hook, Matilda, 409.
 Hope, 377.
 Huggins, W., the translation of Ariosto,
 and Baretto, 56.
 Hunt, Mr., 450.

- Hunting, Dr. Johnson's opinion of, 47.
Hyde Park, 393.
- "Imagination's Search after Happiness," 179.
- Ireland forgeries, the, 291, 293, 298, 301, 303.
- Jackson, Humphrey, his connection with Mr. Thrale, 176.
- Jackson, Mr., 186, 187.
- James, Sir Walter, 438.
- Jebb, Sir R., 205, 207.
— anecdote of, 262.
- Jekyll, his remark on Lord Stowell, 357.
- Johnson, Dr. Samuel, his literary eminence, 1.
— his letter to Mrs. Thrale respecting "*Thraliana*," quoted, 3.
— his introduction into the family of Mr. Thrale, 4, 6.
— his account of the rise of Mr. Thrale's father, 4.
— visited in Johnson's Court by Mr. and Mrs. Thrale, 7.
— disliked by Mrs. Thrale's mother, 7.
— his habits, 8.
— his extremities of poverty and want, 8.
— his eating and drinking, 8.
— his favorite dishes, described by Peter Pindar, 9.
— his affectation of great nicety of palate, 9.
— his fondness for late hours, 10.
— his sterling virtues, 10.
— his household, as described by Lord Macanlay, 11.
— society in which he moved, 12, 13.
— his reverence for bishops, 13.
— his behavior in the society of women, 14.
— his fondness for female society, 15.
— his admiration for Miss Boothby, 16.
— and for Molly Aston, 17.
— his wife, 17.
— his remarks on love, 17.
— probable causes of his long domestication at Streatham, 18.
— his complimentary verses on Mrs. Thrale, 18.
— his Latin ode to Mrs. Thrale translated by Mr. Milnes, 19.
— his verses on Mrs. Thrale's thirty-fifth birthday, 20, 22.
— his gloomy apprehensions of death, 23.
— his dislike at being painted with all his defects, 24.
- Johnson, Dr. Samuel, his conversations at Streatham Park, 25, 27.
— his interview with Lord Marchmont, 26.
— his epigram on Mary Aston, 28.
— his remarks on Demosthenes and the Athenians, 29.
— his opinion of, and respect for, Mrs. Thrale, 30, 32.
— his translations from Boethius, 31.
— and tale of the "Fountains," 31.
— his introduction to Miss Burney, 36.
— his account of the children of Mr. Langton, 37.
— his story of Bet Flint, 38.
— his gallantry, 39.
— his remarks on his own politeness, 39, *note*.
— the moralist and the hatter of Southwark, 41.
— Mr. Thrale's intention of bringing Johnson into Parliament, 42.
— assistance afforded by Johnson to Mr. Thrale in his difficulties, 42.
— portrait of Johnson by Doughty, 43.
— his attention to domestic economy, 44.
— and to propriety in dress, 44, 45.
— his answer to Sir John Lade, 46.
— his fondness for town life, 46.
— his opinion of hunting, 47.
— his delight in carriage travelling, 47.
— drawback on his gratifications, 48.
— his diary of a tour in Wales, 49.
— his description of *Bâch y Graig*, 49.
— his fondness for fruit, 51.
— his visit to Lord Sandys, 51.
— his dislike to the Lytteltons, 52.
— his rudeness to Sir Lynch Cotton, 52.
— his tour in France, 53.
— instance of his occasional impracticability, 53.
— his friendship for, and opinion of, Baretti, 54.
— his evidence on the trial of Baretti, 55.
— Dr. Campbell's description of him, 57.
— his rapid writing, 58.
— his advice to Mrs. Thrale on the death of her husband, 62.
— appointed one of the executors, 63.
— his farewell to Streatham, 65, 86.
— his visit to Brighton with the Thrales, 65.
— his complaints, 66.

- Johnson, Dr. Samuel, his disagreement with Mrs. Thrale, 67.
- his correspondence with her on her marriage with Mr. Piozzi, 73.
 - was Johnson a suitor for the hand of Mrs. Thrale? 81.
 - Miss Seward's account of his loves, 85.
 - his last days, 87.
 - his death, 87.
 - his affection for Mrs. Piozzi, 87.
 - proximate cause of his death, 88.
 - his strict attention to truth, 91.
 - his retort to Pottinger, 96.
 - his habitual disregard for the rules of good breeding, 97.
 - controversy kindled by the publication of the "Tour to the Hebrides," and "Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson," 97-101.
 - "Letters from and to the late Samuel Johnson, LL.D.," 110.
 - his letters on Death, 111.
 - Sayer's print of "Johnson's Ghost," 118.
 - his verses on a young heir coming of age, 134.
 - his apology to Dr. Burney, 214.
 - his unconscious plagiarism, 222.
 - lines on his portrait, 257.
 - Mrs. Thrale's character of him, 488.
- Jones, the Hutchinsonian, 294.
- Jonson, Ben, his "Alchemist," 426.
- Jordan, Mrs., 361.
- "Junius, Letters of," authorship of, 235, 467.
- his denunciation of the Duke of Grafton's devotion to Nancy Parsons quoted, 34.
- Kaleidoscope, Mrs. Piozzi like a, 411.
- Kean, Edmund, 374, 375.
- Keep, Mr., 211.
- Keith, Admiral Lord, his marriage with Miss Thrale, 109.
- Keith, Lady. See Thrale, Miss.
- Kemble, Ben, 356, 378.
- Kemble, John, 442.
- Killaloe, Bishop of, 15.
- Knight, Cornelia, 378.
- Lade, Lady, 174, 177.
- Johnson's remarks on, 45.
 - her conversation with Johnson about her son, 46.
- Lade, Sir John, account of, 46.
- Johnson's answer to, 46.
 - Dr. Johnson's verses addressed to, 135.
 - caricature of, 388.
- Lambert, Mrs., 106.
- Lamoignon, President, his lines, 420.
- Langton, Bennet, Esq., Johnson's remark on, 27.
- and on his children, 37.
 - story of, 388.
- Leicester, Earl of, 293.
- Leighton, Sir Baldwin, 432.
- Lennox, Lady Sarah, 240.
- Leopold, King of the Belgians, 349.
- "Letters to and from the late Samuel Johnson, LL.D.," publication of, 110, 118.
- Lever, Mr. Robert, in Dr. Johnson's house, 11.
- Johnson's lines on the death of, 11.
- Lisbon, earthquake at, 171.
- Liver cases, 437.
- Liverpool, Lord, charms of his conversation, 235.
- Llewenny Hall, 315, 389.
- London, verses for and against, 364, 365.
- Lort, Rev. Dr., 26, 108, 336.
- Loughborough, Lord, his remark on Benjamin Franklin, 239.
- Louis XIV., his politeness, 40.
- Lucan, Lord, 63.
- Lucas, Mr., 336.
- Lust, Spenser's description of, quoted, 84.
- Luttrell, Simon, the "King of Hell," 174.
- Lutwyche, Mrs., 314.
- Lysons, Rev. Daniel, 3.
- Lysons, Rev. Samuel, of Hempstead Court, his collection of books and MSS., 3, 289.
- letters from Mrs. Piozzi to, 80.
 - his collection of scraps, 118; his death, 448.
- Lysons family, notice of the, 289.
- Lyttelton, George Lord, cause of Dr. Johnson's dislike for, 16, 52.
- verses on his portrait, 252.
 - the Lyttelton Ghost Story, 227.
- Lyttelton, Lady, 231.
- Macaulay, Lord, his opinion of Boswell as a biographer, 2.
- and of the value of the Piozzi papers, 2.
 - his description of the inmates of Johnson's house quoted, 11.
 - his remarks on Croker's Boswell's "Johnson," 21.
 - his account of Mrs. Piozzi's second marriage, and of Dr. Johnson's banishment from Streatham, 86.
- Malone, Mr., and the Ireland forgeries, 298.
- Malone, Mr., his remarks on Dr. Johnson's rudeness, 95.

- Maltzan, Count, 231.
 Mann, Sir Horace, at Florence, 129.
 Mannucci, Count, 114, 195.
 Mant, his verses, 455.
 Marie Antoinette, Queen, note on her first confinement, 224.
 Marriage, Selden's remarks on, 301.
 McEvoy, Miss, 378, 403.
 Maxwell's "Collectanea," quoted, 16.
 "Menagiana," quoted, 29.
 Merrick, quoted, 181.
 Merry, Mr., 330.
 — his verses, to Mrs. Piozzi, 270.
 Milan, life at, 194.
 Milnes, Richard Monckton, Esq., M. P., his translation of Johnson's Latin Ode to Mrs. Thrale, 19.
 Milton's "Paradise Lost," quoted, 401, 435, 452.
 Mitre Tavern, 31.
 Mongolfier and his balloon, 328.
 Monkton, Mrs. (afterwards Lady Cork) and Dr. Johnson, 14.
 Montagu, Mrs., one of the founders of the Blue-Stocking Club, 14, 114, 213, 218.
 — her "Essay on Shakespeare," 90.
 — Johnson's story of, 104.
 — Mrs. Piozzi's remarks on her conduct, 107.
 Montcalm, his dying words, 242.
 Moore, Archbishop, and the Duke of Marlborough, 244.
 Moore, Thomas, his "Journal," quoted, 137, 145, 273, *note*.
 More, Miss Hannah, 15.
 — her remarks on the "Tour to the Hebrides," and "Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson," 97, 101.
 — her opinion of Dr. Johnson's Letters to Mrs. Thrale, 113.
 Mostyn, Mrs., 79, 83, 303, 306, 398, 458.
 Mountedgecombe, Lord and Lady, 374.
 Mount's Bay, 472.
 Mulgrave, Lord, and Burke, 241.
 Murphy, Mr., introduces Johnson into the family of Mr. Thrale, 6.
 — lines on his portrait, 254.
 — his song, "Attend all ye fair," 325.
 — his fidelity, 361.
 — his portrait by Reynolds, 434, 439, 442.
 Musgrave, Sir R., 408.
 Naldi, the singer, 71.
 Naples, Mrs. Piozzi's notes on, 130.
 Nash, Bean, 211.
 Nesbitt, Mrs., 174, 205.
 Nicholson, Miss, 74, 80, 188, 480.
 Nicholson, Peg, 231.
 Ninon de l'Enclos, 434.
 North, Lord, 42.
 — his maxim quoted, 331.
 North, Mr. Dudley, Dr. Johnson's character of, 91.
 Norton, Sir Fletcher, 232.
 — verses on, 232.
 Nova Scotia, colonization of, 168.
 Offley Place, 170.
 Omali, the Sandwich Islander, 116, 450.
 Ombersley, Johnson's visit to, 51.
 "On a Weeping Willow," &c., 285.
 O'Neill, Miss, 414, 415, 447.
 — compared with Mrs. Siddons, 414.
 Oratory, Johnson's declamation against action in, 29.
 Ord, Mrs., 61, 70, 107.
 Ossian, originality of, 417.
 Paap, Simon, the dwarf, 398, 409.
 Parini, the Abbate, his impromptu on Mongolfier's balloon, 328.
 Parish, Mr., and the Princess Talleyrand, 340.
 Parker, Dr., his complimentary verses to Mrs. Thrale, 223.
 Parr, Dr., his correspondence with Mrs. Piozzi, 108.
 Parry, Dr. C., 427, 429.
 Parry, Sir E., 446.
 Parsees, the, 207.
 Parsons, Mr., his verses to Venus, 190.
 — and to Mrs. Piozzi, 191.
 Pasquin and Cardinal Zanelli, 241.
 Pasquinade on Bonaparte, 316.
 Pelham, Mr., 244.
 — Garrick's lines on, 244.
 Pennington, Mrs., 462, 473.
 — her letter to Miss Willoughby, quoted, 146.
 Penrice, Sir Henry, 170.
 Penzance, Mrs. Piozzi at, 463.
 — life at, 464.
 — climate of, 467.
 Pepys, Mr. 61, 108.
 — Johnson's character of, 91.
 — Johnson's rudeness to, 65.
 Pepys, Sir Lucas, 185, 207.
 Pepys, Sir William, 213.
 Perkins, Mr., 28, 108, 177, 202.
 — Mrs. Thrale's letters to, referred to, 40.
 — and the print of Dr. Johnson, 43.
 — purchases the brewery, 64.
 Persians, the, in London, in 1818, 425.
 Pindar, Peter, his enumeration of Dr. Johnson's favorite dishes, quoted, 9.
 — his verses on Dr. Johnson and the whiskey at Inverary, 31.
 — his satire on Boswell and Mrs. Piozzi, quoted, 99.
 Piozzi, Mrs., her moral character, 2.
 — value and attraction of her writings, 2.

- Piozzi, Mrs., list of the papers contained in the present work, 2.
- her "Thraliana," 3.
- her marriage to Mr. Thrale, 6.
- her first introduction to Dr. Johnson, 6.
- her conversation, 26, 85, 109.
- Johnson's verses and ode to her, 19, 20, 22.
- year of her birth, 21.
- her personal appearance, 22.
- her portrait by Roche, 24.
- and by Sir Joshua Reynolds and Hogarth, 24.
- her familiarity with the learned and modern languages, 27, 31.
- Johnson's opinion of her, 30.
- her translations from Boethius, 31.
- and her "Three Warnings," 31.
- her fugitive pieces, 31.
- popular estimate of her, 33.
- her reception of Miss Burney at Streatham, 34.
- her trials and bereavements, 40.
- her attention to business, 40.
- her tour in Wales, 49.
- her visit to her birthplace, 51.
- Dr. Campbell's description of her, 57.
- her feelings outraged by her husband, 60.
- her account of a *conversazione* at her house, 61.
- death of Mr. Thrale, 62.
- sale of the brewery, 64.
- leaves her home at Streatham, 64.
- her disagreement with Johnson, 67.
- commencement of her acquaintance with Piozzi, 69, 183.
- her marriage to Piozzi, 71, *et seq.*
- visits Italy, 80.
- was Johnson a suitor for her hand? 81.
- Miss Seward's account, 85.
- Mrs. Piozzi's "Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson," 90.
- her alleged inaccuracy, 90.
- Peter Pindar's satire on her and on Boswell, 99.
- success of her "Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson," 101.
- Walpole's opinion of it, 101.
- her return to, and reception in, London, 105.
- her domestic thoughts, 106.
- her return to Streatham, 108.
- her correspondence with Dr. Parr, 108.
- names of the friends visiting or corresponding with her, 108, 109.
- Piozzi, Mrs., marriage of her eldest daughter, 110.
- her "Letters to and from the late Samuel Johnson, LL. D.," 110.
- Baretti's treatment of her, 114.
- her remarks on Baretti's death, 115.
- and on his character, 116.
- the comedy of "The Sentimental Mother," 117.
- her alarm at Mr. S. Lysons's collection of scraps, 118.
- her "Observations and Reflections," 119.
- criticisms on the work, 119.
- her style, 119, 120.
- Gifford's lines on her, 121.
- quotations from her *Travels*, 122 *et seq.*
- her "British Synonymy," 132.
- her "Retrospection," 135.
- leaves Streatham for North Wales, 138.
- description of her and her husband, in 1808, 142.
- death of Mr. Piozzi, 143.
- their portraits, 143.
- her way of life after his death, 143.
- her fancy for W. A. Conway, 143.
- her ball and supper on her eightieth birthday, 146.
- her death, 146.
- her will, 148.
- her character, 152, 155.
- her autobiographical memoirs, 161.
- her domestic trials, 185.
- her account of her second marriage, 188.
- her residence in Italy, 192.
- her biographical anecdotes, 195.
- Mr. Thrale's will, and account of the sale of the brewery, 201.
- account of Mr. Thrale's death, 207.
- and of Dr. Collier, 209.
- her marginal notes on the two volumes of printed letters, 211.
- her notes on Wraxall's "Memoirs of my own Time," 224.
- her original compositions in prose and verse, 247.
- her letters, 289.
- extracts from "Thraliana," 477.
- Piozzi, Mr., 61.
- account of the commencement of his acquaintance with Mrs. Thrale, 69, 183.
- his singing, 69, 70.
- his marriage with Mrs. Thrale, 71, 188.

- Piozzi, Mr., Miss Williams Wynn's opinion of him, 83.
 — his personal appearance, 84, 85.
 — his prudent economy, 89.
 — his losses in Italy, 139.
 — his character, 141.
 — his death, 143, 199.
 — account of him, 184.
 Politeness, 35.
 — Mrs. Thrale's, 35.
 — Dr. Johnson's, 39, *note*.
 Pope, Alexander, Johnson's Life of, 26.
 — conversation at Streatham on his "Universal Prayer," 26, 27.
 — quoted, 120, 346.
 — anecdote of, 125, 126.
 — his letter to Martha Blount, 383.
 Porter, Miss, her "Pastor's Fireside," 382.
 Pottinger, Johnson's retort to, 96.
 "Piozziana," 23, *note*.
 — quoted, 21, 23, 24, *note*, 27, 59, 161.
 Prior, Matthew, Dr. Johnson's opinion of, 25.
 Queeny (Miss Thrale). See Thrale, Miss.
 Quin, the actor, 167.
 Radcliffe, Dr., 438.
 Ravase, the Abate, his verses to Mrs. Piozzi, 279.
 Ray, Mrs., her school at Streatham, 185, 196.
 Regent's Park, 393.
 "Retrospection," &c., of Mrs. Piozzi, 135.
 Revolution, French, effects of the, 124.
 Reynolds, Sir Joshua, his conversations with Dr. Johnson, 14, 15.
 — his portrait of Mrs. Thrale, 24.
 — excellence of his portraits, 253, *note*.
 — lines on his portrait, 254.
 Reynolds, Miss, her "Recollections of Dr. Johnson," quoted, 32.
 Rhuddlan Castle, visited by Johnson, 50.
 Rice, Mrs., 174, *note*.
 Richardson, Samuel, 213.
 Roche, the miniature painter, his portrait of Mrs. Piozzi, 24.
 Rodney, Admiral, 227.
 — his victory over De Grasse, 243.
 Roffette, the Abbé, and Dr. Johnson, 53.
 Romanism, 397.
 Rome, poverty of, 378.
 — an English church in, 399.
 Rogers, Samuel, 302, 451.
 Rondeaux, Mrs. Thrale's verses on, 215.
 Rondeaux, Voiture's, 216.
 Rothes, Lady, 61.
 Rugby school and original painting, 438.
 Rumbold, Sir Thomas, epigram on, 243.
 Rush, Mr., 177.
 Ryder, Bishop of Gloucester, 403.
 Sacchini, his singing, 69.
 Salisbury, Bishop of, 351.
 Salusbury, Miss Hester Lynch, her marriage to Mr. Thrale, 6. See Piozzi.
 Salusbury, Mrs., her dislike to Dr. Johnson, 7, 165.
 Salusbury, Mr. (Mrs. Thrale's father), 50.
 Salusbury, Sir John Salusbury Piozzi, notice of, 139, 140, 199, 382.
 — Miss Wynn's anecdote of him, 140.
 Salusbury, Dr. Thomas, 170.
 Salusbury, Lady, 170.
 — her death, 171.
 Sandwich, Lord and Lady, 236.
 — his baboon, 237.
 Sandys, Lord, Johnson's visit to, 51.
 — Johnson's remark on, 104.
 — verses on his portrait, 252.
 Savage, Richard, his poverty and want, 8.
 — his extravagance, 134.
 Sayers, his print of "Johnson's Ghost," 118.
 "Scaligerana," 440.
 Scott, Sir Walter, 341, 342, 380.
 — his novels, 11, *note*, 422, 436.
 Schwellenberg, Mrs., 111, 112.
 Scrase, Mr., 177, 416.
 Serpent worship, 440.
 Seward, Mr., at Streatham Park, 35, 211.
 Seward, Miss, 108, 109.
 — her account of Mr. and Mrs. Piozzi quoted, 85.
 — and of Dr. Johnson's affection for Mrs. Thrale, 85, 86.
 — her opinions of Dr. Johnson's letters to Mrs. Thrale, 114.
 — her remarks on Baretti's conduct, 115.
 — her criticism on Mrs. Piozzi's travels, 119.
 Shelburne, Lord, 231.
 Shephard, Charles, 467.
 Sheridan, Thomas, 241.
 Siddons, Mrs., 197, 290, 291, 294, 303, 393, 446, 464.
 — letter from Sir James Fellowes to, 151.
 — her letter to Mrs. Piozzi, 151.
 — in Aspasia's character, 354.
 Sieyes, the Abbé, and the Dauphin, 321.

- Simson, Joe, story of, 220.
 Sisera and Jael, 334.
 Sisterna, Prince of, 80.
 Snow, red, 429, 442.
 Social verses, 283.
 "Society, Ode to," 273.
 Sophia, the Electress, 169, *note*.
 Southcote, Joanna, 378.
 Spelling, laws of, unfixed in the last century, 120.
 Spencer, Hon. W., his verses, 347.
 "Spenceiana," 465.
 Squib, the auctioneer, 355.
 Staël, Madame de, her "Delphine" and "Corinne," 138.
 — her similarity to Mrs. Piozzi, 152, 153.
 — Byron's estimate of her, 155.
 Staker, Dr., 186.
 Stanley, Blind, 215.
 Stanley, Lady, 330.
 Steamboats on the Thames, 394.
 Steevens, George, Esq., his veracity, 32.
 Sterne, Laurence, his "Tristram Shandy," 223.
 Stevens, Zenobia, story of, 315, 469.
 Stonehenge, 220.
 Story, a frightful, 268.
 Stowell, Lord, on the proposal to bring Dr. Johnson into Parliament, 42.
 Stratton, Mrs., 432.
 Stratton, Miss, the actress, 415.
 Streatfield, Miss Sophia, and Mr. Thrale, 60, 61, 477.
 — Mrs. Piozzi's account of her, 203, 209, 477.
 Streatham Park, Johnson at, 6, 18, 26, 27, 36, 57.
 — Miss Burney's account of her first visit to, 34.
 — life at, 37, 57, 175.
 Streatham Portraits, the, 251.
 — verses on the, 252.
 Succession powder, 243.
 Swift, Dean, his epistle of Mary Gulliver quoted, 30.
 — his fondness for fruit, 51, 52.
 "Synonymy, British," Mrs. Piozzi's, published, 132.
 — extracts from, 494.
 Talleyrand, Prince, his remark on Madame de Staël, 154.
 "Tatler," the, 234.
 Taylor, Dr., 114.
 Taylor, Mr. Watson, 434, 438, 439, 442.
 "Temple, Letters to," of Boswell, 2.
 Thackeray, Dr., 344.
 Thistlewood conspirators, 390.
 Thomas, Archdeacon, at Bath, 403.
 Thrale, Mrs. See Piozzi, Mrs.
 Thrale, Mr., introduction of Dr. Johnson into his family, 4, 6.
 Thrale, Mr., account of the rise of his father, 4, 5.
 — his early life and education, 5, 6.
 — his introduction to Johnson, 6.
 — his visit to Johnson in Johnson's Court, 7.
 — his personal appearance, 22.
 — Johnson's opinion of his learning, 28.
 — Miss Burney's description of him, 37.
 — his ill health and misfortunes, 40, 41.
 — his intention of bringing Dr. Johnson into Parliament, 42.
 — assisted by Johnson in his difficulties, 42.
 — his embarrassments, 43.
 — his preference for Miss Sophia Streatfield to his wife, 60.
 — his illness, 61.
 — and death, 62.
 — his introduction to Miss Salusbury, 172.
 — his marriage, 174.
 — his mode of life, 175.
 — his imprudence, 176.
 — his connection with Humphrey Jackson, 176.
 — his pecuniary difficulties, 177.
 — account of his will, and sale of the brewery, 201.
 — and of his last illness, 205.
 — his death, 207.
 — lines on his portrait, 255.
 — his character as sketched by Mrs. Piozzi, 263.
 — his mode of teaching swimming, 451.
 Thrale, Mr. Ralph, Johnson's account of, 4.
 — true account, 5.
 Thrale, Miss (afterwards Lady Keith), 48, 49, 51, 53, 64, 188, 360.
 — Miss Burney's description of her, 35.
 — her conduct on her mother's marriage, 78.
 — her filial affection, 79.
 — her marriage to Admiral Lord Keith, 110.
 "Thraliana," Johnson's letter to Mrs. Thrale respecting, quoted, 3.
 — its present possessor, 3, 162.
 — quoted, 46, 110, 115, 132, 139, 162, 178, 263, 420, 477.
 Thornton, Mr. H., and Mrs. Thrale, 41.
 Thurlow, Lord, anecdote of, 235.
 Thynne, epitaph on, 275, *note*.
 "Time, Death, and H. L. P.," 286.
 "Tristram Shandy," plagiarisms in, 223.
 Trotti, the Marquis, 197.
 Truth, Johnson's regard for, 91.

- Tulip mania, 447.
 Twiss, Mrs., 339.
- Vansittart, Dr., and Dr. Johnson, story of, 97.
- Vega, Lope de, his sonnet quoted, 216.
 — imitated by Mr. Roderick, 217.
- Venetian story of Mrs. Piozzi, 128.
- Venetian women, 129.
- Venice, crime in, in the last century, 127.
 — the Mendicanti of, 129.
- Vesey, Mrs., one of the founders of the Blue-Stocking Clubs, 14.
- Vienna, Mrs. Piozzi's notes on, 130.
- Vincent, Dr., Dean of Westminster, his account of Baretti quoted, 56.
- Voiture's famous Rondeau, 216.
- "Vortigern," forged play of, 301, 303.
- Wade, Mr., and the love letters, 219.
- Wales, tour of Dr. Johnson and the Thrales in, 49.
 — published by Mr. Duppa, 49.
- Walpole, Sir Robert, 431.
- Walpole, Horace, his remarks on the "Florence Miscellany," 89.
 — his remarks on Boswell and Mrs. Piozzi, 98.
 — his opinion of Mrs. Piozzi's Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson, 101.
 — his opinion of Dr. Johnson after reading his Letters to Mrs. Thrale, 111.
 — his criticism on Mrs. Piozzi's Travels, 119.
 — his letter to Mrs. Berry quoted, 121.
 — his "Love Story," 296.
- Ward, the actor, 415, 433.
- "Warnings, The Three," 248.
- "Warnings, The Three," when published, 31.
- Warton, Dr., his opinion of Baretti, 56.
- Waterloo Bridge, 313.
- Watson, Bishop, his "Apology for the Bible," 300.
- Weston, Sophia, 148, *note*.
- Whalley, Dr. and Mrs., 455.
- Whitbread, S., M.P., 212.
- Wilberforce, Mr., 388.
- Wilkes and Lord Guildford, story of, 372.
 — story told by, 94.
- Williams, Mrs., 11, 12.
- , Mrs. Anna, her "Miscellanies," 31.
- , Miss Helen, and Mrs. Piozzi, 109, 395, 455.
- Willoughby, Miss, 465, 468, 471.
- Wilson, Miss, the singer, 471.
- Wilton, Fanny, 211.
- Wit, Barrow's description of, quoted, 155.
 — Mrs. Piozzi's, 155.
- Women, Dr. Johnson in the society of, 14 - 16.
 — Dr. Johnson's remarks on female dress and demeanor, 44, 45.
- Wraxall, Sir N. W., his remarks on Mrs. Thrale's colloquial powers quoted, 14.
- Mrs. Piozzi's notes on his "Historical Memoirs," 224.
- Wroughton, Mrs. and Miss, 349, 354.
- Wynn, Miss Williams, 82, *note*
 — extracts from her "Common-place Book," 310.
- Yonge, Sir William, 120.
- Young, the actor, 410, 444.
- Zanelli, Cardinal, and Pasquin, 241.

THE END.

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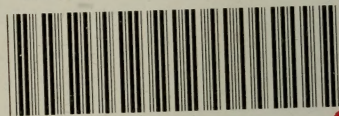


p 358





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